CANADIAN JOURNAL OF THEOLOGY

A Quarterly of Christian Thought

Vol. VII, No. 2 April, 1961

EDITORIAL

The English Bible T.R.M. 79

ARTICLES

Recent Trends in Systematic Theology WILLIAM HORDERN 82

Much Ado About Words: Some Reflections on Language, Philosophy, and Theology R. F. ALDWINCKLE 91

On the Significance of Niebuhr's Ideas of Society ISMA'IL RAGI AL FARUQI 99

Christianity in a Non-Christian Country: Problems of Japanese Christianity Since 1549 P. KEN IMAI 108

Jesus Christ Yesterday: The Historical Basis of the Christian Faith E. C. BLACKMAN 118

BOOK REVIEWS

Floyd V. Filson: *A Commentary on the Gospel according to St. Matthew*; Sherman Johnson: *A Commentary on the Gospel according to St. Mark* FRANK W. BEARE 128

Edgar J. Goodspeed: *Matthew: Apostle and Evangelist* DOUGLAS R. A. HARE 130

Eduard Schweizer: *Lordship and Discipleship* (*Studies in Biblical Theology No. 28*) L. LOUIS DE GROOT 132

Jean Bosc: *The Kingly Office of the Lord Jesus Christ* JOSEPH MCLELLAND 133

Arnold B. Come: *Agents of Reconciliation* A. J. CHALLACOMBE 135

R. S. Wallace: *Calvin's Doctrine of the Christian Life* JOSEPH D. FRY 136

Ian T. Ramsay: *Freedom and Immortality: The Forwood Lectures in the University of Liverpool* GORDON WATSON 137

Kenneth Cragg: *Sandals at the Mosque: Christian Presence amid Islam* F. V. WINNETT 139

CONTRIBUTORS

The Rev. R. F. Aldwinckle, M.A., D.Th., is Professor of Systematic Theology, McMaster Divinity College, Hamilton, Ontario.

The Rev. E. C. Blackman, M.A., B.D., is Professor of New Testament Literature and Exegesis, Emmanuel College, Toronto.

Isma'il Ragi al Faruqi, A.M., Ph.D., is Visiting Fellow in the Comparative Study of Religion, Faculty of Divinity, McGill University, Montreal.

The Rev. William Hordern, Ph.D., teaches Systematic Theology at Garrett Biblical Institute, Evanston, Illinois.

The Rev. P. Ken Imai, B.A., S.T.B., M.Th., is Priest-in-charge of St. Andrew's Church, Dufferin Street (Japanese Anglican Congregation), Toronto.

We invite contributions, which should be addressed to the Secretary of the Editorial Committee. MSS should be typewritten, double spaced, and proof-read before being submitted. Notes should be gathered at the end of articles, with appropriate references. No MS will be returned unless accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope.

The Journal is recognized as a charitable organization for Canadian income tax purposes. Financial contributions, other than the amount paid for subscription, may be deducted from the donor's income, when calculating tax. Donations are urgently needed if the price of the Journal is to be kept within the means of all subscribers.

Business correspondence should be sent to Mr. W. C. James, Treasurer of the Board of Directors, Victoria University, Toronto. Cheques in connection with the business of the Journal (except for subscriptions) should be made out to The Canadian Journal of Theology, Incorporated, payable at par in Toronto.

Subscriptions should be sent to the University of Toronto Press, Toronto 5. Cheques in payment of subscriptions should be made out to University of Toronto Press, payable at par in Toronto.

Subscription Rates

Regular		*Students*	
One Year	$3.00	One Year	$1.50
Two Years	$5.00	Two Years	$3.00

Single issues $1.00

Editorial

THE ENGLISH BIBLE

THE MORE important translations of the Bible into English have been made in three historical periods, 1380 to 1397, 1524 to 1611, and 1881 to the present day. From the first brief period come the two Wycliffite versions. From the vital Reformation age, in astonishing variety and excellence, come the translations of Tyndale, Coverdale, and Rogers; the Great Bible associated with Thomas Cranmer; the Geneva Bible of Whittingham; the Bishops' Bible of Matthew Parker and his collaborators; the Rheims-Douai Bible, and finally the King James Version whose 350th anniversary is now being observed.

Although many private versions of the Bible in whole or in part were published within the two and one half centuries after 1611, yet the Revised Version of 1881–1885 opened the third great age of translation. Since then have appeared the Standard and Revised Standard Versions; the Bible in Basic English; various versions in modern speech such as those of Weymouth, Moffatt, Goodspeed, and Powis Smith; the Knox translation from the Vulgate; and paraphrases by Wand and Phillips. This year the New English Translation of the New Testament has been printed.

Many of these translators have left records of what they believed about the Bible and what they hoped to accomplish as they began their exacting and, in early times, dangerous work. It is of interest to inquire whether, although separated by centuries, they speak on basic themes with a common voice.

Of the three periods the earliest has a peculiar charm, sounding as it does the fundamental note of the middle ages, yet with overtones of a new time coming. John Purvey's *General Prologue* which accompanies some copies of the second Wycliffite Bible is in many respects a characteristic medieval document. It was modelled on ancient prologues such as that of St. Jerome. It bowed to orthodox authorities like Augustine, Isidore, and Nicholas of Lyra. It recommended the familiar fourfold method of biblical exegesis, the literal, moral, allegorical, and anagogical. At one point the *Prologue* makes bible study appear a task of some complexity:

> By these rules of Austin and by four understandings of holy scripture, and by sure knowledge of figurative speeches, with good living and meekness and studying the Bible, simple men may somewhat understand the text of holy writ and edify much themselves and other men.

But other passages from the same hand point to a new pattern of thought and simpler qualifications for such a study, as:

> He whose heart is full of charity comprehendeth without any error the manifold abundance and largest teaching of God's scripture.

The *Prologue* distinguishes between the intellectual task of translation and the devotional use to which the translation is to be put, but it makes clear that for a full understanding of scripture both translator and reader must first obey the law of charity before they can expect to grow in wisdom and spiritual knowledge. The men of this period were aware of the difficulties attending translation but they had faith that the same Holy Spirit who brooded over the composing of the books of the Bible would aid in the interpretation of them. Above all, so they believed, Christ was to be found everywhere in the Old Testament as in the New. He supplied the key to all the treasures of divine truth contained in the Bible.

Translators and Bible students of the Tudor period belonged to the new age of the Renaissance. They felt themselves to be wiser than their fathers, as indeed they were. They threw themselves into the work of translation, not from the Latin only, but also from Greek and Hebrew. Equally with the Wycliffe circle they believed the Bible to be "Godde's lawe," containing answers to questions both political and religious. They modified or rejected the medieval scheme of biblical interpretation, giving greater attention to the literal and historic meaning. Like the "Translators to the Reader" in the Authorized Version of 1611 they wrote defensively, as if wielding both sword and pen, to warn, to encourage, and to persuade:

> O receive not so great things in vain, O despise not so great salvation! Be not like swine to tread under foot so precious things neither yet like dogs to tear and abuse holy things. . . . It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God; but a blessed thing it is and will bring us to everlasting blessedness in the end, when God speaketh unto us, to hearken; when he setteth his word before us to read it; when he stretcheth out his hand and calleth, to answer, Here am I; here we are to do thy will, O God.

They recognized a deep need for the Bible in the vernacular. Robert Crowley, who reprinted Purvey's *Prologue* in 1550, but who attributed it to Wycliffe, speaks in his preface of "greedy students of God's book," and of those who "hunger for the perfect knowledge of God's word." With all their learning they too recognized that the Bible was written for all men. Cranmer wrote in the preface to the Great Bible:

> The Holy Ghost hath so ordered and attempered the Scriptures that in them as well publicans, fishers and shepherds may find their edification as great doctors their erudition.

They wrote prologues of great grace and beauty, as befitted the high themes which were presently to be treated in the Bible itself. To the translators of the Geneva Bible the Word of God was

> the light of our paths, the key to the kingdom of heaven, our comfort in affliction, our shield against Satan, the school of all wisdom, the glass wherein we behold God's face, the testimony of his favour and the only food and nourishment of our souls.

Those whose ears are attuned to the full orchestration of Tudor English will find the Bible introductions of the third and present period muted and dissonant. Ancient battles, so the writers seem to feel, have been fought and won and need no further mention. It is assumed that education is widespread, hence no difference needs to be made between wise and ignorant for all are now wise. No effort is made to persuade, preach, or propagandize. Much is said, drily and factually, about advance in knowledge of ancient tongues and of archaeology and about the necessity for translators to keep up with this progress. The poetry and adventure and evidence of strong faith that pulsates in every line of introductions of former ages is strangely absent. Yet, truth to tell, the present generation of Bible readers is able to use more accurate translations of the original than readers in earlier centuries. Doggedly and patiently translators as well as theologians and commentators are pursuing their essential and never-ending tasks, and doing them well, without the support and encouragement which was available to their predecessors in times past. Yet now and again the old winning tones are gently sounded, sufficient to show that Christians of the fourteenth, sixteenth, and twentieth centuries are partakers in a common faith. The Preface to the Revised Standard Version of the New Testament says:

> In the Bible we have not merely an historical document and a classic of English literature, but the Word of God. The Bible carries its full message, not to those who regard it simply as a heritage of the past or praise its literary style, but to those who read it that they may discern and understand God's Word to men.

Although the Authorized Version of 1611 has seen its greatest days yet the translators of three hundred and fifty years ago wrought a great work and merit a salute from us as we contemplate, and indeed continue to use, their wonderful achievement. Let the trumpet voice of their more robust faith speak, both for themselves and also for our own confused generation, what we and they, and all his people down the ages, really know "God's sacred Word" to be:

> That inestimable treasure, which excelleth all the riches of the earth; because the fruit thereof extendeth itself, not only to the time spent in this transitory world, but directeth and disposeth men unto that eternal happiness which is above in heaven.

T.R.M.

Recent Trends in Systematic Theology

WILLIAM HORDERN

THE TWENTIETH century has witnessed a great revival in theology and theological concerns. It is difficult for a seminary student today to realize that quite recently theology was in eclipse. In many quarters philosophy of religion was hailed as the successor to theology. In biblical studies historical and critical questions had pushed biblical theology from the scene. All of that has changed radically. A theological revolution began with Barth's publication of his commentary on Romans in 1918 and continued up to the second World War. During this time theology was disrupted with revolutionary thinking and bitter battles. Since World War Two theology has witnessed a consolidation of the earlier revolution. Important advances have been made but the changes have not been so radical and the waters have not been so turbulent.

A quick look at the present scene in theology can be had by reading a series recently published by Westminster Press.[1] Three theologians, E. J. Carnell, L. H. DeWolf, and the writer, were asked to state the case for orthodox, liberal, and new reformation theologies respectively. This series makes clear that the sharp lines drawn between these theological positions in the twenties and thirties have been blurred or even disappeared. The remarkable thing about these three books is the large area of agreement. All men express faith in the unique revelation of God through Christ, a revelation that brings redemption to man who otherwise is lost in sin. All agree in ultimately resting their case on the biblical revelation but none of them accepts the Bible mechanically or literally. All of them show a deep desire to learn from the Christian past but they have no wish to become slaves to the past.

Equally important with the areas of agreement is a willingness in each of the books to enter into creative conversation with other points of view. No one of them claims to have the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. E. J. Carnell, writing for orthodoxy, speaks for the spirit of all three when he says of his own position, "Orthodoxy does not have all the answers; nor does it always ask the right questions. And when it gives the right answers to the right questions, it often corrupts its claims with bad manners."[2] If one compares this irenic discussion with the fratricidal strife of the fundamentalist-liberal controversy or with the angry bitterness of earlier

1. Carnell, E. J., *The Case for Orthodox Theology*, Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1959. DeWolf, L. H., *The Case for Theology in Liberal Perspective*, Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1959. Hordern, William, *The Case for a New Reformation Theology*, Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1959.
2. Carnell, E. J., *op. cit.*, p. 139.

debates between liberalism and neo-orthodoxy, it is evident that theology has moved sharply towards greater agreement and towards a more harmonious discussion.

This is not to say that all issues have been resolved. The series reveals that there are still areas of real difference. In particular, the issues of revelation and knowledge of God are very much alive. Orthodoxy is still arguing for the reality of propositional revelation and liberalism is defending natural theology, while the new reformation position denies both. Although there is agreement on the centrality of Christ, Christology and atonement are still points where agreement is not complete. There will still be debate between these schools but it is going to sound more like an argument within the same family than a debate between opposing faiths (as it has so often seemed to be in the past).

But the series reveals something else. In many ways the liveliest debates in theology today are no longer between the three schools which it presents. It is most significant that in this series neither Paul Tillich nor Rudolf Bultmann is given a hearing, and many readers have felt that their own position did not lie with any one of the three. We can no longer suppose that the only live options in theology are fundamentalism, liberalism, and neo-orthodoxy.

Without doubt the most significant happening in theology during the past decade has been the continuation of Karl Barth's monumental *Church Dogmatics* and its translation into English (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark). Whether one agrees with Barth or not, it cannot be denied that he is the most impressive theological thinker today as he has been for the last forty years. We hear much today about the "new Barth" who has emerged in more recent writings. It is debatable whether or not there is a new Barth. Certainly the mature Barth of the *Dogmatics* is quite different from the brash young man who wrote the commentary on Romans. And as one reads the *Dogmatics* he finds nothing to uphold the stereotype of Barth that has been dominant on this side of the Atlantic. That is, Barth does not appear as an irrationalist who shuns social responsibilities and offers salvation without a new life for man. But it is doubtful that there has been a change in Barth here; it is rather that Barth has been consistently misunderstood and misrepresented. One thing is clear: the Barth of 1918 and the Barth of today stand squarely on the complete initiative of God in both revelation and salvation. But, as volume IV,2, of the *Dogmatics* makes clear, this is not to deny man's real participation as the covenant-partner of God. And in a recent work Barth can say, "Theology is in reality not only the doctrine of God, but the doctrine of God and man."[3]

This means that today Barth does not emphasize so exclusively the otherness of God. Over against a liberalism that began with man and his experience, Barth had to shout his protest in the name of God's transcendence. But now that the point has been made, he is able and willing to see

3. Barth, Karl, *The Humanity of God* (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1960), p. 25.

the availability of God for man. Furthermore, having repudiated the liberal's optimism about man, Barth has shown the true optimism of the Christian Gospels. G. C. Berkouwer rightly called his book, *The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth*.[4] As one reads the *Dogmatics* one is again and again impressed at the joyous hope that pervades it. It is impossible to understand how some can still refer to Barth as a pessimist. The Christian Gospel that Barth proclaims is not that man is a sinner but that he is a redeemed sinner. Furthermore, he emphasizes the fact that God has loved the *world* and redeemed it. Christianity does not take a dim view of the world as such.

In light of the development of Barth's thought I feel that the time has come to speak of a "post-neo-orthodox" theology. The term "neo-orthodox" was never accepted as a banner by any group of theological thinkers. It was a term invented by critics of the position so designated. It is dubious if such a thing as "neo-orthodoxy" ever did exist except in the fevered minds of its opponents. But, whereas the earlier thought of the men called "neo-orthodox" tended to emphasize sin and the separation of God and man, the new emphasis is upon salvation and the reconciliation of God and man. The earlier emphasis was made necessary by the theological climate in which Barth, Niebuhr, and the others first wrote. But as that climate has been changed by these men themselves, they have been able to demonstrate that there was more to their position than its initial protest. This makes most references to "neo-orthodoxy" today sound archaic.

In light of the later emphases of "neo-orthodoxy," contemporary theology is showing a real concern for conversation with culture. In a recent book, outlining this current concern, Roger Hazelton says: "To one who has been brought up theologically on Barth and Brunner, Niebuhr and Nygren, it is startling . . . to find one's fellow theologians reading Baudelaire or Rilke, listening to off-beat music and going to off-Broadway shows."[5] This statement sounds very strange to me because it is precisely from the theologians that he mentions that I have been motivated to understand the world and culture to which we must preach the Gospel. In fact, I would argue that an important fruit of the last forty years in theology is that today's theologian realizes that he must speak to the culture in which he finds himself. Whereas liberalism saw the necessity of speaking to the modern world and fundamentalism saw the need to preserve the Gospel, the last forty years in theology have come to see that we must do both together.

At certain points this concern for theological conversation with culture shows dangers of becoming overly enthusiastic. Many of the theological interpreters have found "Christian" insights in strange places. A true conversation with culture must take unbelief seriously and not try to find Christian elements where none are intended. Recently I heard a philosopher

4. Berkouwer, G. C., *The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth*, Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1956.

5. Hazelton, Roger, *New Accents in Contemporary Theology* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1960), p. 14.

taking a theologian to task for claiming that there are deep "Christian" insights in the works of Sartre. I think that the philosopher was quite right. We will not find the Gospel preached directly or indirectly in Sartre, Camus, or Tennessee Williams. But what the theologian can find in such authors is a vivid portrayal of the essence of the age to which we are called to proclaim the Gospel.

Ever since the rediscovery of Kierkegaard there has been considerable theological concern with existentialism. The term "existentialism" still remains rather vague and, since men as diverse as Sartre, Heidegger, Jaspers, Marcel, Buber, and Bultmann are called existentialist, it is evident that no precise school of thought is designated by the term. A good introduction to existentialism from a theologian with a deep appreciation for it is David Roberts, *Existentialism and Religious Belief* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1957). An excellent theological critique is Arthur Cochrane, *The Existentialists and God* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1956). In my opinion, one of the best books on Kierkegaard is Martin Heinecken, *The Moment Before God* (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg, 1956).

The conversation between theology and existentialism is now sufficiently advanced so that some conclusions can be drawn. There is no doubt but that there are valid elements in existentialism which theology must appropriate. True theological thinking must always be an existential involvement in the faith and not an objective examination of subject matter. The existentialist examination of man's experience of anxiety, decision, and search for himself are important for theology. But I believe that the existentialist emphasis in theology is on the wane.

It is apparent that existentialist philosophy has not made significant inroads into Anglo-Saxon philosophy and it is probably past its peak on the continent. The theologian who desires to speak to his culture is not so likely to be speaking to an existentialist as he is to be the one who drags in existentialist thought. Furthermore, many theologians are beginning to wonder if existentialist thought-forms are adequate to express the Gospel. Can we so simply identify the "being" analysed in existentialism with God, the Creator, as Tillich attempts to do? Does not existentialism force us to begin with such a man-centred framework that the reality of the God who comes to man is obscured? Is it not the case that the anthropology of existentialism is only a study of man as he exists in the first Adam while Christian anthropology must be based on Christ, the Second Adam? Questions like these are causing many theologians to take some serious second thoughts about the marriage between existentialism and theology that seemed well on its way to consummation ten years ago.

Another reason why concern with existentialism is waning is that theology is slowly awakening to its need for conversation with the dominant philosophy in Anglo-Saxon countries, that of linguistic analysis. During this century theologians have debated widely over the part, if any, that philosophy might play in theological thought. But a major irony of this debate is

that most theologians have ignored what is really happening in philosophy today. The philosophy to which theology has been related is not the philosophy that reigns today among philosophers.

It is not surprising that British theologians have led in opening the conversation with the linguistic analysts, since that philosophy has reigned there the longest. The book, *New Essays in Philosophical Theology*, edited by Flew and MacIntyre (London: S.C.M. Press, 1955), sets up some of the important issues. With it should be read the series of essays, *Faith and Logic*, edited by Basil Mitchell (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1957). Since these pioneering works several books on the subject have appeared.

The dialogue with linguistic analysis is vital because it forces theology to ask about the nature of its language. Christianity is a faith which is under marching orders to communicate itself to the world. But we live in an age that is witnessing a crisis in communication. How, we must ask, can we use language to express the faith so that, on the one hand, it will be meaningful to the modern world and, on the other hand, it will not be false to the eternal Gospel? Theology which is concerned with the preaching of the Word cannot help profiting from a serious conversation with the philosophy that concentrates on how words behave.

But it is evident that the theologian who enters into conversation with linguistic analysis will have to operate differently from the philosophical theologians of the past. Linguistic analysis will not provide an apologetic for the faith; it has no natural theology to offer and will probably refute any natural theology that is attempted. This will make linguistic analysis seem quite uninteresting to theologians who have expected philosophy to help validate the Christian faith. But to theologians who believe that Christian faith comes with its own power to persuade the conversation can be most helpful.

An important theological development in recent years has been the continuing progress made in rediscovering the Reformers. In a real sense these studies have rescued the Reformers from both their friends and foes. T. F. Torrance's works are well known for their analysis of the Reformers, particularly Calvin. His book, *Calvin's Doctrine of Man* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1949), is a good example. One of the finest of these studies remains Philip Watson's study of Luther, *Let God Be God* (London: Epworth Press, 1947). Through works like these, Luther and Calvin have emerged in their full power as thinkers. No longer are they read through the eyes of the Protestant orthodoxy that followed them. Seen in the light of these studies, their message for today seems strangely contemporary.

Inspired by the rediscovery of Luther and Calvin, a number of contemporary Methodists have been going back to rediscover John Wesley. *John Wesley's Theology Today*, by Colin Williams (New York-Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1960), and Franz Hildebrandt's works, *From Luther to Wesley* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1951) and *Christianity According to the Wesleys* (London: Epworth Press, 1956), are excellent examples of this rediscovery. It becomes evident that Wesley has suffered greatly from his admirers.

I was raised on the assertion that Wesley had no theology and that he taught a religion of experience alone, but it is now evident that Wesley was a powerful theologian. One wonders whether the talks leading to Church union in Canada might have been different and whether the Presbyterians who stayed out of the United Church of Canada might have felt differently had the Canadian Methodists understood Wesley better at that time. After all, Wesley himself confessed that he was only a "hairsbreadth from Calvinism."

During the past decade theology, particularly in the United States, has become concerned with the problem of cultural religion. Of course, this is not a new problem for Christians. As recently as the thirties Barth and the Confessional Church in Germany had to face cultural religion in the demonic form of German Christianity under Nazi auspices. In America cultural religion is not such an obviously demonic force, but it may be ultimately more dangerous because of the benign appearance which it bears. Several important studies have been made of this phenomenon in America. Some, like Will Herberg, *Protestant, Catholic, Jew* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1955), have been sociological studies with theological undertones. On the other hand, Martin Marty, *The New Shape of American Religion* (New York: Harper, 1959), is a profound theological critique of the cultural religion.

Cultural religion takes the form of religion for religion's sake. It embraces the primary social and cultural goals of society and gives to them a religious sanction. God is highly extolled but he is seen as the God who is unquestionably "on our side." Cultural religion refuses to face questions about the particular nature of God. Thus during the recent presidential election campaign a prominent American stated that it does not matter what a presidential candidate's religion is, "just so long as he believes in God." It was just such an attitude that led one perceptive observer to declare that the average American has a "fervent belief in the Great Whatever." In such an atmosphere anyone who tries to sharpen the concepts of our faith is sure to be chided with being divisive and intolerant. He will be told that it is fine to believe, but dangerous to proclaim boldly that we know in whom we have believed.

In the minds of many theologians this cultural religion is the greatest threat to Christian faith today. Communism is a more obvious enemy, but, precisely because it is so obvious, it is not so dangerous. Cultural religion infiltrates itself into our churches, it adopts the vocabulary of Christians, and how can you argue with it when it is obviously successful in filling the churches? There can be no doubt about the "success" of cultural religion; it has been a main factor in the revival of religion in the past decade. The source of its popularity is not far to seek. It promises man everything that his sinful heart desires; it proclaims that he has God's help in achieving what he already wants to achieve. It has nothing to say about taking up one's cross, it never mentions coming to love those things that we formerly hated and to hate those things that we formerly loved.

Despite her emphasis upon separation of church and state (or perhaps even because of it), America finds herself with a state religion today, as Marty makes clear. But the state religion bears only a dangerously misleading similarity to the biblical faith. This is a fact that contemporary theology is taking most seriously.

One of the greatest flurries in recent theological thought has been caused by Rudolph Bultmann's call to "demythologize" the *kerygma*. Although this storm broke in Germany during the war, it came to English-speaking countries somewhat later. *Kerygma and Myth*, edited by H. W. Bartsch (London: SPCK, 1953), is still the best introduction to it, although a large literature has arisen around the subject. Bultmann's own *Jesus Christ and Mythology* (New York: Scribner, 1958) is a solid summary of his position. Essentially, Bultmann and his followers have been concerned with the problem of communicating the Gospel to the modern world and its scepticism. It is Bultmann's thesis that the modern man cannot accept the Gospel so long as it is clothed in the mythical form in which it is found in the Bible. Consequently, it must be "demythologized" and presented in an existential form, so that modern man can see what it means for him today. To do this Bultmann draws heavily on Heidegger's philosophy.

Some of Bultmann's points seem to be trivial. For example, he complains that we can no longer make sense out of phrases like "ascended into heaven" or "descended into hell," now that we no longer believe in a three-storied universe.[6] One wonders if Bultmann has stopped speaking about the sun rising and setting, to conform to modern astronomy. But other questions are serious: for example, how can we preach a Gospel that is set in a framework of miracles, demons, and the Second Coming of Christ? Whether we agree with Bultmann or not, we must confess that there are real problems in communication to be faced in these areas.

It is difficult to say how strong Bultmann's following is today. There seems to have been no reliable poll taken of theologians on this matter. Some reports from Europe tell us that he is the most influential figure today in continental theology, but other reports tell us that the flurry is over and that Bultmann's theories have already been sent into eclipse. Certainly it is clear that some of his chief disciples are moving away from the master. In this country there are a number of Bultmannites, but there seems little evidence that they will form more than an interesting minority. Bultmann seems to have made little impression in Great Britain.

The debate that has raged around Bultmann has produced much heat, but less light than most theological debates. A major reason for this seems to have been Bultmann's failure to provide a consistent definition of what he means by "myth" and what a "demythologized" *kerygma* would be. Again, Bultmann is vague when he speaks of the "modern scientific view" which makes a "demythologizing" of the Bible necessary. Philosopher Karl

6. Bartsch, H. W. (ed.), *Kerygma and Myth*, translated by R. H. Fuller (London: SPCK, 1954), p. 4.

Jaspers takes him to task at this point.[7] As a result, although Bultmann has consistently denied it, he has been understood by many to lose the historicity of the Christian faith. As Gustaf Wingren puts it vividly, Bultmann's emphasis is so exclusively upon decision in the present that he has no concern with either the past or the future.[8] Finally, Bultmann's strong reliance on the categories of Heidegger's philosophy has not proved to be an aid in communication. Few people claim to understand Heidegger, and those who do cannot agree about what he is really saying. It is significant that philosophers in Great Britain and America usually mention Heidegger only as an example of one who commits various logical blunders.

Although the "modern man" for whom Bultmann translates the Gospel may seem rather rare, it would be unfortunate if we failed to take Bultmann's questions seriously. A faith dedicated to preaching the Word cannot overlook the scandal that is often created by the way in which the Word is spoken. We will always carry this treasure in earthen vessels, but we ought to struggle to see that the earthen nature of the vessels does not become more of a hindrance than is necessary.

The work of Paul Tillich has continued to stimulate discussion in the United States. The secular press has come to refer to him as "America's leading theologian." During this past decade the first two volumes of his *Systematic Theology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951–1957) have appeared and the third should be available by the time this article appears. Walter Leibrecht has written an excellent summary of Tillich's theology in a volume, *Religion and Culture* (New York: Harper, 1959), which he edited in honour of Tillich. Since retiring to Harvard University Tillich has caught the imagination of many college students.

On the whole Tillich's theology does not seem to have won too large a following. He seems to have had little influence on continental theology since he left Germany in the thirties, and when he gave the Gifford Lectures in Great Britain his reception was cool. His concentration upon ontology seems strange to those who share the prevailing moods in both theology and philosophy. Furthermore, his work has proved to be of such a nature that different readers or listeners come away with radically different views of what he has said. Naturalistic humanists and quite orthodox Christians are prepared to call Tillich their own. In view of the emphasis that Tillich has given to the importance of communication, it is ironical that there is no agreement upon what he has in fact said.

In recent years there has been a great interest in the unfinished theological work of the German martyr, Dietrich Bonhoeffer. Most of his works are now translated into English and at least one book, *The Theology of Dietrich Bonhoeffer*, by John D. Godsey (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960), has appeared to interpret his thought. Bonhoeffer's importance lies in the

7. Jaspers, K., and Bultmann, R., *Myth and Christianity* (New York: The Noonday Press, 1958), pp. 5ff.

8. Wingren, Gustaf, *Theology in Conflict* (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1958), p. 130.

fact that, while his theology is deeply Christocentric, he has shown an amazing ability to enter into the sceptical spirit of the modern world and to speak to it with real empathy. In fact, he finds that the godlessness of the modern world is, from the viewpoint of Christianity, a "hopeful godlessness."

Conservative theology has made a remarkable comeback during the past decade. After the fundamentalist-liberal controversy, fundamentalism became isolated from theological discussion. But in recent years an impressive group of younger conservatives has arisen. Although men like Carnell, Carl Henry, G. C. Berkouwer, and others, stand on much of the earlier fundamentalist platform, the wrathful attacks made upon them by the right-wing fundamentalists prove that they have struck a new note. They have made two interesting criticisms of contemporary Protestant trends. For one thing, they criticize the concept that God is revealed only in his mighty acts. Can we, they ask, have knowledge of God without revealed propositions and why cannot the Bible be seen as itself a mighty act of God? Secondly, they are critical of the tendency of Protestantism today to make the Church and its proclamation central instead of Christ.

In such a brief survey many important elements of contemporary theology have had to be ignored. For example, there is the modest but real development of a conversation between Protestant and Roman Cathloic theologians. Again, there is the conversation between theology and psychotherapy. Or one might have said something about the increased attempts at producing a theology for the layman who is desirous of understanding his faith. But these and many other points must be bypassed here.

In summary, theology has been a busy and a growing activity since the second World War. It has many capable spokesmen and is dedicating itself to new and vital issues. It has its feet placed more firmly in the historical faith than was the case twenty or thirty years ago and, because this is so, it is able to speak more forthrightly to the world in which it finds itself. When Barth and other "crisis theologians" first made their protest, the situation was such that theology had to be primarily centred in the church and spoken to the church, for until the church had been called back to its faith it could not speak a saving word to the world. But now that that battle has largely been won, there is an opportunity to look to the second task of theology—conversation with the world to which it seeks to preach the Gospel.

Much Ado About Words: Some Reflections on Language, Philosophy, and Theology

R. F. ALDWINCKLE

To be back in Oxford again after a lapse of twenty-four years is an absorbing and disturbing experience. The passing on of so many notable former teachers is an unhappy reminder of the passing of one's own youth. On the other hand, the abiding beauty of Oxford and the English spring refreshes the spirit with a sense of that which abides in the midst of flux, to quote the late A. N. Whitehead. But enough of this autobiography. It did seem to me that readers of the *Canadian Journal of Theology* might be interested to have some impressions of the changes which have taken place in the theological and philosophical atmosphere of Oxford over the past quarter of a century. Everyone has heard at least of linguistic philosophy or philosophical analysis or logical positivism, though the precise connotation of these phrases is not so well appreciated. It is generally known that philosophy in Britain in this century has been increasingly concerned with the analysis of language, and that there has been a powerful reaction against the idealist tradition so notably represented by F. H. Bradley, Bernard Bosanquet, and Pringle-Pattison in Scotland, to mention only a few. Some of the earlier extreme phases of this kind of analysis had dismissed religious language as meaningless, and ethical language as only emotive ejaculations. A. J. Ayer's *Language, Truth and Logic* (London: Gollancz, 1936) was the classical example of this earlier uncompromising logical positivism.

It would, however, be a mistake to assume that philosophical analysis is the only dominant influence in British philosophy today. One need only consult *Contemporary British Philosophy* (edited by H. D. Lewis, London: George Allen & Unwin, 1956), to see this. Professor R. G. Mure's recent *Retreat from Truth* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1958) is a caustic attack upon linguistic analysis and all its works from the standpoint of Hegelian idealism. Incidentally, it is stimulating to find that in England today, philosophy is by no means an esoteric interest. A. J. Ayer is a familiar figure on television panel programmes. The Third Programme of the B.B.C. recently had four extremely good talks on Ludwig Wittgenstein, that strange genius from Austria and former Cambridge teacher, who is regarded by many as chiefly responsible for the present interest in language. His *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (London: Kegan Paul, 1922) and *Philosophical Investigations* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1953) seem to have a kind of biblical authority for his more passionate devotees. The public interest in current philosophy was shown not long ago in a correspondence in that typical English Institution,

The Times. A book was recently published entitled *Words and Things: an Examination of, and an Attack on, Linguistic Philosophy*, by Ernest Gellner, a Professor of Sociology at the London School of Economics. As the sub-title indicates, this is an attack, conducted with considerable verve and rather biting sarcasm, on the leading linguistic philosophers in England at the present time. Professor Gilbert Ryle, the editor of *Mind*, and himself a leading representative of modern empiricism and linguistic philosophy, refused to review the book for *Mind* on the grounds that the author had accused modern philosophers of being disingenous. The result was a letter to *The Times* by Bertrand Russell in defence of Mr. Gellner, accusing Mr. Ryle of unfair partisanship. This was enough to start one of those correspondences for which *The Times* is famous, with everyone happily joining in the debate as to whether linguistic philosophy is the last sign of decadence or the beginning of a grand philosophical renaissance. This at least made philosophy "news" for several weeks. I shall attempt to indicate briefly what the debate was about, and then add some reflections on the bearing of all this upon the works of the theologian.

Those who wish for a review of the history of philosophical analysis in this century should consult Professor Urmson's *Philosophical Analysis* (London: Oxford University Press, 1956). The key names in this development are G. E. Moore, Bertrand Russell, Ludwig Wittgenstein, and later Gilbert Ryle and A. J. Ayer. Those who regard themselves as standing in this tradition believe that they are doing something new in philosophy. In fact, a series of essays with an introduction by Professor Gilbert Ryle, was published in 1956 under the title *The Revolution in Philosophy* (London: Macmillan, 1956). While some continuity with the past is acknowledged, particularly with the English empiricists, it is clear that the contributors believe that there has been a revolution in the understanding of what constitutes philosophy. What is the nature of this revolution? Professor G. J. Warnock indicates his views on this in his little book *English Philosophy since 1900* (London: Home University Library, 1958). The revolution involves the following two points:

(1) Its followers are suspicious of all attempts to tie up philosophy with *Weltanschauung*, *i.e.*, to present a comprehensive and synoptic view of all truth issuing in religious or moral or philosophical dogmas about the universe "as a whole."

(2) Modern philosophy rarely deals directly with religious, moral and political questions, or with questions of cosmic import. Some regard this as a mere limitation of scope imposed by the kind of question that interests them, namely, the analysis of language. Others claim that philosophy has essentially nothing to do with such questions. "Philosophy is the study of the concepts that we employ, and not of the facts, phenomena, cases or events to which these concepts might be or are applied."[1]

1. Warnock, G. J., *English Philosophy since 1900*, p. 167.

Philosophy, then, is ideologically neutral when questions regarding moral and spiritual *Weltanschauung* are concerned. Philosophy has now become a highly skilled, professional kind of competence, and the amateur can no longer hope to step in with his high sounding generalizations and moral and spiritual platitudes. It is this limitation of the scope and nature of philosophy which is the object of Mr. Gellner's special attack. Professor Ryle has pointed out that during the time between the undergraduate career of F. H. Bradley (1856–1924) and his own, academic intellectuals in Britain were predominantly clerical, and naturally most keenly interested in theological questions, either for or against. By the 1920's all this had changed. There had taken place a "laicising of our culture and a professionalising of philosophy." Logic, language and scientific method were the main preoccupations of the philosopher.

What then, according to Mr. Gellner, are the basic presuppositions of modern linguistic philosophy? The very use of this phrase may itself be criticized and indeed has been criticized as implying that all who adopt the method of philosophical analysis are themselves united in a special view of the nature of philosophy and agreed in accepting or dismissing certain kinds of language as meaningful or meaningless. Professor Gellner, however, is not deterred from asserting that certain very questionable assumptions underlie the methods of all these different thinkers. Whether each individual thinker consciously accepts each or all of these assumptions is not important. What is important is that their work adds up to a certain total impression as to how they conceive the role of philosophy. What, then, are the basic assumptions? First is what Gellner calls the argument from the paradigm case. To understand fully what is involved in this principle would demand a fuller treatment than is now possible of that strange figure, Ludwig Wittgenstein. Born in Vienna on 26 April 1889, of Jewish descent but with a Roman Catholic father, he early showed his passion for physics, his interest in machinery, and his desire to become an engineer. He came to England in 1908, and was deeply influenced by Bertrand Russell in mathematics. On the outbreak of war in 1914, he volunteered to serve in the Austrian army. After various experiences, he found his way to Cambridge and succeeded Moore in the chair of philosophy in 1939. He was too restless to remain in academic life for long and gave his last lectures in 1947. After two years of severe illness, he died, leaving behind him comparatively little in the way of published work but a powerful influence upon many of his most distinguished contemporaries.

Throughout his life, he was deeply and continuously concerned with the nature of language and its function. All language presupposes a non-linguistic context and is as much a part of normal social behaviour as eating, drinking and walking. It was this which led him to insist that the meaning of language is in its use. We must see how words and sentences function in actual daily usage. "The meaning of a word is its use in the language."[2]

2. Wittgenstein, L., *Philosophical Investigations*, p. 43.

It is this Wittgensteinian influence which leads the modern linguistic philosopher, according to Gellner, to try to answer philosophical problems by the analysis of the actual use of words in ordinary discourse. One might very well ask what is ordinary usage, the speech of the man in the street or the highly sophisticated talk of Cambridge dons. It was also Wittgenstein who coined the phrase "language games." Certain kinds of language express certain kinds of meaning and in actual fact we must understand the rules (*i.e.*, the assumptions underlying the particular usage of any kind of language) if we are to talk meaningfully in that kind of language. There are all sorts of language games and none can be ruled out as illegitimate nor can we jump from one language game to another and hope to be understood. But, says Gellner, if the final appeal is to actual usage of language, is this not in fact an appeal to uncriticized common sense and a refusal to ask questions of philosophical meaning which imply our ability to go beyond the actual use of language in one particular language game? When Dr. Johnson heard Berkeley's denial of the existence of matter, he kicked a stone, saying, "Thus I refute Berkeley." In fact he was doing no such thing and his action in no way refuted Berkeley's philosophical explanation of matter which was quite compatible with Johnson's ability to kick a stone. According to Gellner, the linguistic philosophers are kicking stones to solve their problems but are in fact solving nothing.[3]

Certain basic language games, according to these philosophers, are necessary. There are various species or categories of human discourse which must exist to express what we want to say about beauty, rightness, material objects, logical relations, etc. We cannot possibly deny these various categories. The denial of the language game of a particular species of human discourse is impossible, for this would mean that we could not talk at all about these things. But, argues Gellner, there is no reason why we should not deny a category in the name of truth and validity. The fact that a certain kind of language is used about witches and their rôle does not prove either that there are or that there are not witches. A philosopher may indeed deny a "whole genre of speech, witch language."[4] This means that the actual use of language cannot be the court of final appeal. The limits of the various language games are not given once and for all. In so far then as linguistic philosophy is based upon the appeal to the paradigm case, *i.e.*, actual usage, it is an arbitrary refusal to face the genuine philosophical problems. Philosophy is the asking of questions about categories or species of language as a whole, and it is illegitimate to dub this extra-philosophical. The bane of linguistic philosophy is its attempt to limit philosophy to trivial exercises with language usage rather than to enter upon the reconsideration of basic philosophical concepts which concern the validity and meaningfulness of whole categories of species of language. Another basic weakness is the contrast theory of meaning. This implies that meaningfulness depends on

3. Gellner, E., *Words and Things*, p. 32.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 35.

the fact that positive and negative statements can be made about a certain thing. An apple has meaning because some things are apples and others are not. If a term lacks this contrast or antithesis, it cannot be meaningfully defined. Since God is unique and cannot be defined by contrast with finite things, the word itself can convey no definite and clear-cut ideas. Again, one could not refute the doctrine that no moral statements are true, on the ground that it pointlessly abolishes the contrast between valid and invalid moral judgments. One could argue that the drawing of moral distinctions is a matter of subordinate distinctions within a wider class of meaningful assertions and that, within this wider contrast, this class of statements may be rejected as arbitrary, a bad move in a wider language game. In other words, this contrast theory of meaning is of no help at all in solving fundamental questions of validity of any particular species of language. Mr. Gellner's final charge is that linguistic philosophy, unlike Descartes, insists on unclear and indistinct ideas, and that it is contemptuous of generality, except perhaps in the sciences. In philosophy, generalizations as such are suspect and *ex officio* damned. For the philosopher, to be able to say what the world is really like implies a basic or fundamental language, but this latter is precisely what is impossible. Hence the logical analysts' stress upon the complexity and variety of the different language games to the exclusion of genuine philosophical thinking.

This summary does not exhaust the full content of Mr. Gellner's book, nor does it include the sarcastic wit with which it regales the reader. It is hoped, however, that this account will have laid bare the central issues of the debate between the author and those linguistic philosophers in whose tenets he was reared and against which he has so passionately revolted. Past philosophy assumed one language, and many problematic worlds or realms. Linguistic philosophy has many language uses in one unproblematic world. It claims to be neutral about this world, but in fact insinuates a vision of it. Moreover, the vision leaves much to be desired and its truth is certainly open to question. Mr. Gellner believes that linguistic philosophy ends in dullness and platitude, and in the evasion of basic thought about fundamental and genuine conceptual alternatives.

Needless to say, as the correspondence in *The Times* showed, this onslaught has provoked strong reaction both for and against. Professor Gellner has been accused of lumping all the linguistic philosophers together and attacking them all without discrimination or fair appraisal of the total views of individual men. This may be true, but the challenge to reconsider the fundamental assumptions of linguistic philosophy will be welcomed by many who do not accept the whole of the Gellner critique.

What has all this to do with the Christian theologian? Of course, it is possible to say that philosophers have always indulged in this kind of thing and let them get on with it. What has Athens to do with Jerusalem? The Christian is not wedded to any special philosophy at all, and another "revolution in philosophy" leaves him unmoved. For those, however, who

cherish the alliance of biblical faith and rational thought (and they are many from the early days of the church until now), the passing by of theology or philosophy on the other side of the road, like the priest and the Levite in the well-known parable, is much to be deplored. How far can theologians and philosopers learn to talk with each other again in language which is significant for both? How far can a Christian give a reason for the faith that is in him, without being mocked and scorned for his use of reason at all in defence of the faith?

It would be a mistake to assume that theologians and non-linguistic philosophers have been silent or inactive while this so-called revolution in philosophy has been taking place. I use the term non-linguistic as a convenient though admittedly imprecise label. It is one of the unfortunate popular impressions derived from linguistic philosophy that only modern philosophers have been interested in the careful analysis of language, its use and meaning. This, of course, is quite wrong. Aristotle, Aquinas, and Kant, to mention only the three most famous, were deeply concerned with problems of language, though their conclusions were vastly different from those of modern linguistic philosophers. However, the term non-linguistic can stand for the moment to designate those philosophical thinkers who would not consider themselves to belong to the succession described, for example, in Mr. Warnock's book.

What can the theologian do in this kind of atmosphere? He can attempt to vindicate the classic theological position. This has been done on the Roman Catholic side by such notable thinkers as Etienne Gilson and Jacques Maritain, and in England recently, by Father F. C. Copleston in his *Aquinas* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1955) and his monumental *History of Philosophy* (London: Burns Oates, 1946–). Among the Anglicans reference may be made to the works of Austin Farrer and E. L. Mascall. All these thinkers represent a creative restatement of Thomism, not a slavish and unimaginative reproduction of medieval forms of thought. On the other hand, the attempt may be made to offer a critique of empiricism, while accepting the challenge of linguistic philosophy as to the meaning of religious language and its verification. Thus we find Professor H. A. Hodges saying that anyone who takes theology seriously is "committed to rejecting important features of the empiricist logic."[5]

Another position is represented by Professor I. T. Ramsey in his two books *Religious Language* (London: SCM Press, 1957) and *Freedom and Immortality* (London: SCM Press, 1960). Dr. Ramsey regards logical empiricism, not as an enemy to be fought, but as "a tool which can be of the greatest service to theology." He believes, with some of the linguistic philosophers, that many theological problems and confusions stem from linguistic confusion, and that the theologian can clear up many of these with the aid of modern philosophical analysis. Religious language, he claims, must be appropriately "odd" to do justice to the discernment-

5. Lewis, H. D., *Contemporary British Philosophy*, p. 231.

commitment which is the characteristic religious situation. We have to take "models" from the empirical world and qualify them in a suitable manner to make them serviceable in speaking about God. In so doing, we discover that religious language is significantly different, or logically odd. When we describe God as the first cause, for example, we are not using cause in the same sense as when we say that cold is the cause of heat, or that my parents were the cause of my existence, or that the acorn is the cause of the oak. Nor are we saying that God is one in an endless series of causes strung out in time and space. The word *first* means not only first in a temporal series but prior to all possible causal stories. It is clear that by the time the theologian has finished with it, both *first* and *cause* have been qualified to give them a unique significance logically different from the normal use of these words. Failure to realize this involves us in such traditional difficulties as the child's "Who made God?" with the implication that there is no reason why the causal series should ever have a beginning or an end for that matter.

Another example, from his second book, is the problem of human freedom and divine omnipotence. The difficulties which arise, according to Professor Ramsey, spring from the inadequate qualifying of our *model*, in this case power. God is thought of after the analogy of a sergeant major or a battle-axe headmaster or a dominating prime minister, or an oriental potentate. But if the power of God is the worship he inspires (a quotation from A. N. Whitehead), if power is anchored in the characteristic religious situation which evokes worship and our free response to the power of the divine love, then there is no problem. "The problem of man's freedom and God's omnipotence is thus a pseudo-problem which disappears when the appropriate logical placings are given to each phrase."[6] It is not intended to give here a full account of Dr. Ramsey's argument, or to make any critique of it. One may nevertheless wonder whether this solution to an age-old problem is too simple. Does it really do justice to the theist contention that God is Sovereign Creator and sustainer of the world, or to the facts of biology, psychology, and history? This is not to deny that Dr. Ramsey is right to go back to the religious situation in which the power of God is understood in a thoroughly Christian sense, but questions remain which can hardly be dubbed pseudo-problems.

The title of this article is "Much Ado About Words," and the attempt has been made to keep close to those modern treatments of theological and philosophical problems which obviously owe a great deal to philosophical analysis. There are two other books which deserve special mention because their starting point is somewhat different. One is H. D. Lewis, *Our Experience of God* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1959), and the other is G. F. Woods, *Theological Explanation* (London: Nisbet, 1958). Lewis, while fully conversant with modern developments in philosophical analysis, treats the subject of religious language in much closer relationship to experi-

6. Ramsey, I. T., *Freedom and Immortality*, p. 59.

ence than is often the case these days. All that can be said here is that this is a significant book deserving special and detailed consideration. Woods, in a careful analysis of different kinds of theological explanation, insists that "the whole plurality of our explanatory methods springs from the fact that we are personal beings." The book is a sustained defence of the use of qualified personal analogies with reference to God.

Finally, mention must be made of P. F. Strawson's *Individuals* (London: Methuen, 1959). He distinguishes between descriptive metaphysics, which is content to describe the actual structure of our thought about the world, and revisionary metaphysics, which is concerned to produce a better structure. He regards his book as belonging to the first category. It is clear, from what he says in this book and elsewhere, that Mr. Strawson's kind of philosophical analysis has a broader scope than is usually associated with this label. It may be the task of philosophy to correct errors due to linguistic confusion but "it would be itself a paradox to represent the *whole* task of philosophy as the correction of philosophical mistakes."[7] We want to know, not only how our conceptual equipment works, but why it works as it does, but this is to ask "how the nature of our thinking is rooted in the nature of the world and in our own natures."[8] Strawson also leaves the door open for the creative or constructive work of the philosophical imagination, in which we try to view the world through the medium of a different conceptual apparatus and speak about it in ways different from, though related to, those which we actually use. This is evidently not the kind of linguistic philosophy attacked by Mr. Gellner, which makes ordinary language and its use the final criterion.

And so the debate continues. Mr. Warnock insists that the restrictive iconoclasm of logical positivism is alien to the spirit of modern philosophy. The latter is only too eager to acknowledge that language has many uses, ethical, aesthetic, literary, and indeed metaphysical. There is no tendency to impose an arbitrary prohibition against using this or that particular kind of language. It would, however, be premature to assume from this that a revival of metaphysics is on the way, though clearly the atmosphere is changing, however slowly. Meanwhile, the theologian is still confronted with the problem of explaining what he means by the language he uses and showing the evidence on the basis of which theological affirmations are made.

7. *The Revolution in Philosophy*, p. 106.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 107.

On The Significance of Niebuhr's Ideas of Society

ISMA'IL RAGI AL FARUQI

Editorial Note

It is not usual to preface a contribution to this journal with an introductory paragraph, but the article which follows has certain unusual features which perhaps justify an exception in this instance.

Isma'il Ragi al Faruqi is visiting Fellow in the Comparative Study of Religion in the Faculty of Divinity at McGill University. By birth a Palestinian Arab, he was first educated in French Catholic mission schools and later at the American University at Beirut. He came to this continent and studied western philosophy, gaining his master's degree at Harvard and his doctorate at Indiana. He continued his work in Islamic studies at the McGill Institute of Islamic Studies and was then invited to join the Faculty of Divinity as visiting Fellow.

Dr. Faruqi is a devout Muslim whose faith has impressed all his colleagues by its qualities of conviction and sincerity. Personally charming, he has become a popular member of the Senior Common Room and is often at the centre of keen discussion. He is well acquainted with the teaching of western philosophers, including the European moderns, and has a knowledge of the works of Barth, Brunner, Tillich, Niebuhr, etc., which the professional theologian might well envy.

His present assignment is a critique of the Christian ethic from the Muslim point of view, and the present paper is an outcome of this interest. Not everyone will accept his estimate of Jesus and his teaching, nor will his exposition of Niebuhr's ethical position meet with the approval of all who have studied Niebuhr's writings, and the conclusion which he draws is certainly disturbing to our complacence. But any who set out to controvert Dr. Faruqi's account of either matter will find him armed and formidable in debate. Nevertheless, it is important that we in the West should discover how we appear to eastern eyes, and also that our thinking should be subjected to the searching scrutiny of those who, though they do not share our faith, are yet deeply concerned with religious truth. As a colleague who has learned much from Dr. Faruqi, I am happy to supply this prefatory note.

S.B.F.

I

What is at once surprising and great in the history of Christianity is that, throughout the metamorphoses it has undergone and the unchristlike history

of Western man, the person of Jesus—the concrete example of his life, his stand *in praxi* regarding the tragic nature of existence—was never lost. Nothing could budge the personality of Jesus from the central position it occupied and still occupies in the consciousness of Western man, however committed he may be to the demands of an unchristlike culture and existence. This conflict between a will committed to the affirmation and pursuit of "the world" and a moral consciousness determined by the word-denying personality of Jesus is the key to the understanding of modern Western nature. More precisely, this conflict consists in Western man's assignment of a false rank to elemental values which Jesus had relegated to lower rank and above which it was his peculiar message to place the properly moral and spiritual values.

Ever since he became a Christian, Western man has lived a split life and suffered from a split personality. Jesus and his ethical renunciation on the one hand, and nature with its self-assertion and nature-affirmation on the other, divided his loyalty and being. Although he conducted his life oblivious to Jesus' emphasis on the spiritual over and against the material, yet he invoked Jesus' blessing for every move. While vindicating the self-assertive nature within, now with brute force, now with rational argument, Western man never had the courage of his conviction that the life of nature was right. Consequently, he strove to convince himself that Jesus really approved. This self-deception, however, never worked. It took but a simple apparition of the person of Jesus to Western man's consciousness (often evoked by a recitation of the Sermon of the Mount, by the Passion, or by a genuine Jesus-like deed on the part of his neighbour) and the veil of rationalization of his affirmation was rent. Christianity never succeeded in subjugating nature within, in conquering Western man's ethos-in-action; but it did establish itself as unquestionable master of his ethos-in-consciousness.

For centuries Western man has lived under the strain of this split loyalty. For centuries he has acted self-assertively and nature-affirmatively, and his will as well as his moral judgment *in concreto* have been irretrievably committed to self-assertion and nature-affirmation. Since history dictated his Christianization, he had to learn the technique of representing assertion and affimation to his moral consciousness as sacrifice and altruism. Because he could not see himself as he was, he had to misrepresent himself to himself. His faculty of moral judgment *in abstracto*, on the other hand, had been just as irretrievably mastered by the ethic of Jesus, which can in no circumstances reconcile itself with self-assertion and nature-affirmation. Albert Schweitzer, a man of Jesus-like judgment *in concreto*,[1] could not even grasp, let alone solve, the problem of Western civilization except as one of a search

1. Except when the subject in question is French colonialism in Africa! Expressing the kind of paternalism imperialists delight in, Schweitzer writes: "There can be no question with these peoples [the Africans] of real independence, but only whether it is better for them to be delivered over to the mercies, tender or otherwise, of rapacious native tyrants or to be governed by officials of European states. . . . Even the hitherto prevailing 'imperialism' can plead that it has qualities of ethical value." (*Out of My Life and Thought*, tr. by C. T. Campion, New York: Mentor Books, 1955, pp. 147–8.) In 1957 Schweitzer appealed to President Eisenhower to interfere so as to prevent a United Nations debate on Algeria.

for a formula which would reconcile the message of Jesus with Western world-affirmation. It escaped him that the central message of Jesus was precisely the condemnation of that affirmation. In him, affirmation of "the World," now philosophically conceived as "existence and actuality," is so well entrenched that it not only fashions the problem of civilization as one of justifying itself in consciousness, but it even dictates the conditions under which it is prepared to negotiate peace with Jesus. This it does by prescribing highhandedly and beforehand that any *Weltanschauung* which does not take the legitimacy and righteousness of world-affirmation for granted is *ipso facto* inadmissible.[2]

This self-deception, which did not work, nevertheless left indelible stains upon the nature of Western man and affected, through his deeds, countless millions of people. In his pursuit of "the World" Western man has exploited his neighbours, coloured and white, while all the time representing his efforts to himself as Utopia, liberation, socialism, progress, or (as in the case of the Puritans who invented a causal relationship from material success to divine election)[3] as something not so much of his own doing as of God's. On the international level, Western man has committed aggression, invaded, colonized, and imperialized. His Christian missions carried the cross only side by side with the national flag and often raised the latter higher than the former. His case would deserve sympathy if it were that of the candid man who falls short of his ideal, better self. If this were the case, he would have acknowledged his trespasses, learned from experience, and endeavoured to become better. The fact is, however, that instead of getting progressively closer to each other, the poles of his deeds and his moral judgments continue to travel in opposite directions.[4]

Western man's moral consciousness is as it were his valet. Its duty is not to justify the master's deeds, for these he recognizes as ugly without question.[5] Rather, the duty of this valet is to camouflage them to his consciousness, *i.e.*, to transfigure into milk white the moral black of his actuality and

2. See Schweitzer, Albert, *The Philosophy of Civilization*, New York: Macmillan, 1949, Chap. VII, p. 94f. Presumably, Western man would vehemently contend that the dominant idea of Jesus' ethic was the renunciation of "the World," and would, as will be noted in the sequel, advance interpretations of that ethic which would safeguard "the World" against attack. This typically Western attitude ought to be regarded as an instance of the point that Western consciousness is often incapable of understanding Jesus except as affirming "the World."

3. Tawney, R. H., *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism*, New York: Mentor Books, 1950, pp. 203–5.

4. It may be here contended that in this predicament Western man does not stand alone; that all men fall short of what they ought to be; that all men more or less recognize this ethical shortcoming; and that there is hardly a people whose record is free of aggression and hostility against one another or their neighbours—which is all true. The point, however, is not one of the veracity or otherwise of these propositions, but of the conflict Western man's deeds produce in his own consciousness which approves and does not approve of them at the same time. The uniqueness of Western man lies in his conscious commitment to both "the World" and the ethic of Jesus. Attila and Genghis Khan made war in the consciousness that their gods did, and the monastic recluse who sins does so in the consciousness that his god does not, approve. Western man alone commits aggression in the consciousness both that his deed is ethically right and that it violates the ethic of Jesus.

5. Western man has poured the vials of his wrath upon Germany, his own child, because, under National Socialism, the latter dared to believe in and profess the "righteousness" of Western man's self-assertion.

deed, while the "righteousness" of his will to affirm "the World" goes unquestioned. Indeed, it is unthinkable for him that this affirmation should ever be questioned. As a child of nature, Western man has never risen out of her bosom. The advent of Christianity was significant inasmuch as, by completely converting his moral consciousness without affecting his will, it succeeded only in giving him a bad conscience.

Except in the persons of a few saints, Western man never revolted against nature. Luther and Savonarola, among other Christians of similar moral calibre, saw the personality of Jesus being slowly overcome by the world-affirming forces of their so-called "Christian" neighbours in Rome. The sight of the Church's hierarchy being as much infiltrated by longings after wealth, beauty, and power, as were ever Athens or Bagdad in their heyday, horrified them. Savonarola fired the whole of Italy, and Luther the whole of Germany. Their effect on Western ethical consciousness, however, was short-lived. The former's cause was soon quenched by the world-affirming forces of the Church; the latter's cause managed to succeed, predominantly because social-political-economic forces allied themselves to it. Even so, it was not long before these same forces, once victory over Rome had been achieved, gave Luther the suffocating embrace which neutralized the original ethical character of his cause. Indeed, it is no wonder that the monastic orders of Christendom have never been undermanned; monastic life is the only life in which Jesus comes to his own in Western life, determining man's representation of himself as well as his willing. Secular life, on the other hand, is so governed by instinct and so free of Jesus' ethicizing power that men of sensitive nature can only withdraw from it with horror.[6]

Two alternative avenues out of this dilemma suggested themselves to Western man: to re-create Jesus as a world-affirming teacher, or to deny him altogether. The former avenue has a tradition. It culminated in the "Positive Christianity" which European Fascism[7] and American Progessivism[8] created in order to justify Western man's affirmation of "the World" in his own eyes. To take the place of the ethical, no-saying Jesus of history, this "positive" Christianity furnished an easy-approving, yes-saying Jesus, as much intoxicated with "the World-in-perpetual-spring" as any of his Fascist and Progressivist followers. Transvaluation is always an easy way out, because it performs its work without touching the object of age-old veneration. On the other hand, the avenue of denial is radical and revolutionary. No wonder that only Communism attempted it. Jesus and his no-saying morality, it held, are an opiate preserved and distributed by the ruling class to support its will to power over the less fortunate classes.

6. Dostoievsky, F., *The Brothers Karamazov*, tr. by C. Garnett, New York: Modern Library, Book VI, "The Russian Monk," pp. 295ff.

7. See Rosenberg, Alfred, *Mythus des 20. Jahrhunderts*, Munich, 1930; or Kneller, G. F., *The Educational Philosophy of National Socialism*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1941, pp. 184ff.

8. For an instance in point, see Warner, E. W., "The Heresy of Joy," in *The Divinity School News*, University of Chicago, August 1, 1959, pp. 1–6.

II

The Anglo-Saxon consciousness has been sufficiently removed from the waves of these mighty currents not to be engulfed by them. But it was not able to escape all disturbance. Indeed, the failure of Fascism and the success of Communism have compelled the Anglo-Saxon consciousness to abandon its neutrality and to take sides in the struggle. The most eloquent and prolific mouthpiece of the new attempt to deliver the Anglo-Saxon consciousness from this dilemma is Reinhold Niebuhr. His choice is, in fact, that of Communism, namely, the rejection of Jesus. But unlike the daring Communists, he is careful not to reject Jesus *in toto*, but simply to deny him jurisdiction at the level of societal action. His purpose is to liberate society from the ethic of the Sermon on the Mount in order that it may, by freely meeting evil with evil, assert the self-seeking will in good conscience.

Niebuhr's estimate of human nature is fundamentally that of Hobbes. In society man stands in the midst of the *bellum omnium contra omnes* ("the war of all men against all men").[9] Not that this state is forced upon him; it follows from his essence, and is precisely what nature intended it to be.[10] The person who lacks the "passion" necessary for self-assertion, he says, quoting Shaftesbury, "must certainly be esteemed vicious in regard to the end and design of nature."[11] In another vein Niebuhr calls this predicament in which man finds himself "sin," and regards it as the consequence of man's exaggerated use of his human capacities.[12] But this will to use his capacities without restriction is equally the endowment of nature.[13] To call it "sin"

9. "Society is in a perpetual state of war" (Niebuhr, R., *Moral Man and Immoral Society*, New York: Scribner, 1955, p. 19). For Niebuhr this is an axiom. He then quotes Bentham approvingly: "The clue to the interior of the labyrinth . . . is the principle of self-preference. Man, from the very constitution of his nature, prefers his own happiness to that of all other sentient beings put together"; and adds: "The judgement may be a little too pessimistic . . . but it is nearer the truth than the early hope of the utilitarians that reason could resolve the conflict between self-interest and social interest" (*ibid.*, p. 46).

10. According to Niebuhr, "man is a child of nature, subject to its vicissitudes, compelled by its necessities, driven by its impulses," etc. (*The Nature and Destiny of Man, A Christian Interpretation*, New York: Scribner, 1941, Vol. I, p. 3.)

11. Niebuhr, R., *Moral Man and Immoral Society*, p. 260. Incidentally, this is also identically the view of F. Nietzsche, who regards modern Western man as an animal whom Christian morality had tamed by means of making him sick, *i.e.*, by teaching him to distrust and deny his instincts. "I call an animal, a species, an individual corrupt," he wrote, "when it loses its instincts, when it selects and *prefers* that which is detrimental to it . . . Life itself is nothing more nor less than the instinct of growth, of permanence, of accumulating forces, of power: where the will to power is lacking, degradation sets in." (*The Antichrist*, tr. by A. M. Ludovici, Section 6.)

12. "Man . . . is a sinner . . . because he is betrayed by his very ability to survey the whole to imagine himself the whole" (*The Nature and Destiny of Man, A Christian Interpretation*, Vol. I, p. 17). "The Freedom of his spirit causes him to break the harmonies of nature and the pride of spirit prevents him from establishing a new harmony. . . . His failure to observe the limits of his finite existence causes him to defy the restraints of both nature and reason" (*ibid.*). Niebuhr had previously told us that the nature of nature was conflict and self-seeking; now he is introducing the concept of a "harmony of nature" in order to ground in nature Christian salvation which would otherwise remain outside of it.

13. "It is . . . unthinkable that a group should be able to attain a sufficiently consistent unselfish attitude toward other groups to give it a very potent redemptive power" (*Moral Man and Immoral Society*, p. 26).

therefore avails nothing. It may satisfy the Christian prerequisite of furnishing that from which salvation can take place, but it leaves reality, the real "nature," just as it was before. Although redemption may change the ethical will which in turn may either sanctify and spiritualize "nature," or prevent the fulfillment of its ends, it can never change "nature." Since Niebuhr bases his ethical and political theories on the empirical facts, rather than the desiderata of human nature, the introduction of the concept of sin is superfluous.

The alternative of opposing nature, *i.e.*, of subjecting it to a higher law that is derived not from it, but, like the law of Jesus, "from heaven," does not appeal to Niebuhr. He distinguishes between "mutual love"—a utilitarian give-and-take arrangement by which one serves his own interest by serving another's—and "sacrificial love," that "impossible possibility,"[14] which is the absolute demand of God upon human life, calling for an absolute obedience regardless of consequences to the will of God, however such obedience may run counter to "nature." The first is self-interest all over again, now become enlightened to seek its ends more effectively by circuitous routes. The other is "impossible." "The ethical demands made by Jesus," Niebuhr argues, "are incapable of fulfillment in the present existence of man."[15] This fantastic thesis Niebuhr defends on the ground that, when Jesus made this demand he was not thinking of this world, not legislating for moral conduct in this world but in the next[16]—a thesis even more fantastic! The most naive understanding of the Sermon on the Mount could not regard its ethical insights as directives for action in another world, whether inside or outside of time. In such an "other" world, there can *ex hypothesi* be no need for morality.

Even if the Christian were to accept Niebuhr's interpretation of the Sermon on the Mount, he would still have to agree that sacrificial love is somehow relevant to this world and must somehow affect human conduct. This constitutes a division of man's loyalty. Between the two gods dwelling within his breast, both of which are commanding, the one possible and the other "impossible" duties, the Christian, as Niebuhr sees him, is torn apart. He must follow the practical dictates of utility, but under the accusing and condemning finger of the moral law. But being itself "impossible," the moral law of Jesus has, under this scheme, the sole function of preserving for Western man his age-old "bad conscience."

Should a person, however, resolve to go against "self" and "nature" and fulfill the imperatives of sacrificial love, Niebuhr would at times call him, with Shaftesbury, "vicious" and at other times he would remove his hat in awe at the superhuman effort involved. But he has no sympathy with any society that confuses its own welfare with the welfare of mankind, or its own duty with the general concept of duty.[17] For social groups, it is necessary to

14. *An Interpretation of Christian Ethics*, New York: Harper, 1935, p. 117.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 56.
16. *Ibid.*
17. "Individual men may be moral in the sense that they are able to consider interests

pursue political policies which the ethic of the individual "will always find embarrassing,"[18] and which "sacrificial love"—or the law of Jesus—will always find contradictory to itself. This sharp dichotomy between an ethic of the individual and an ethic of society Niebuhr explains as necessitated by four considerations:

1. "Social injustice cannot be resolved by moral and rational suasion alone. . . . Conflict is inevitable and in this conflict power must be challenged by power."[19] "Collective power . . . can never be dislodged unless power is used against it."[20] We must understand, he counsels, "the brutal character of the behavior of all human collectives and the power of self-interest and collective egoism in all intergroup relations."[21] One may ask here whether this is a law of science or of morals. If the former, it is irrelevant for the ethical problem of injustice in society, though it may be of some use to those in charge of the execution of social ethical judgment, namely, the governors and police commissioners, on the internal front, and the ambassadors and the military on the international. If it is a law of morals, it is nothing but presumption to prescribe evil (*i.e.*, power, coercion, and conflict) to "dislodge" another evil (*i.e.*, another power) when, *ex hypothesi*, all society and all nature are in essence based upon conflict and power. It is an appeal *ad baculum*, the argument of the big stick.

2. "Every effort to transfer a pure morality of disinterestedness to group relations has resulted in failure."[22] "It would therefore seem better," concludes Niebuhr, "to accept a frank dualism in morals than to attempt . . . policies which, from the political perspective, are quite impossible."[23] Since no social group has shown enough imagination to make itself amenable to the influence of a disinterested pure love, and since there is no possibility "of persuading any social group to make a venture in pure love," he adds, "the selfishness of human communities must be regarded as an inevitability."[24] Logically, this is a *non-sequitur*. Historically, that "every effort . . . has resulted in failure" is only one way of interpreting events and is not at all self-evident. Ethically, it is a counsel of morbid despair. Why ought a society not to pursue the disinterested ethic of pure love alone? There is as little reason to think that such self-sacrifice—if that should be the outcome, though it need not necessarily be so—would be less "successful" at the societal level than was the heroic self-sacrifice of Jesus, in the Christian view, or of Socrates in the more general view, at the individual level.

3. The ethic of pure love, argues Niebuhr, demands sacrifices. In the case of the individual, self-sacrifice is morally right since the self is at once subject and object. It is his own interest that the individual sacrifices. In

---

other than their own in determining problems of conduct, and are capable, on occasion, of preferring the advantages of others to their own. . . . [But for societies such] achievements are . . . impossible" (*Moral Man and Immoral Society*, p. xi).

18. *Moral Man and Immoral Society*, p. xi.
19. *Ibid.*, p. xv.
20. *Ibid.*, p. xii.
21. *Ibid.*, p. xx.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 268.
23. *Ibid.*, pp. 270–1.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 272.

the case of society—where decisions are made by proxy—unselfishness is "inappropriate to the action of a state [because] no one has a right to be unselfish with other people's interests."[25] This argument misses the fact that in a constitutional society the ruler, whether legislative or executive, is as much object of the self-sacrifice decision as the least citizen. He would not be subjecting his fellow countrymen to any unselfishness that he would not accept for himself. More serious, however, is the implicit conception of the ruler as onesided servant of interests rather than as definer of duties. To presuppose that the function of government is merely to "serve" or bring advantages to the citizens, and not to impose duties and extract "prices," is not only to limit unduly the purpose of government, but it is to regard government as a monster bent upon devouring everyone and everything around it. The free bounties of nature cannot be long exploited without nature extracting some "price"; and even an association of robbers cannot last long without some self-imposed duties, not only *vis-à-vis* one another, but *vis-à-vis* the outside world in which they operate. In this regard, Niebuhr's political theory does not so much as rise to the level of recognizing the necessity of sacrifice even in a hedonistic calculus.

4. The application of the norms of individual morality to society, Niebuhr further argues, results in undesirable consequences. "Such a policy easily becomes morbid [and makes] for injustice by encouraging and permitting undue self-assertion in others."[26] Here Niebuhr is oblivious to the power of love, to the "efficacy" of Christian charity, and consequently, of every noble, disinterested, unselfish deed. He has forgotten the Socratic position that to suffer injustice, not only with regard to individuals but absolutely, is better than to perpetrate it. He has completely ignored the Christian truth, central to the whole message of Jesus and therefore to the essence of Christianity, that, absolutely, it is not through evil and hostility that evil and hostility end.

It is surprising that, along with these views of human nature, Christian ethics, and political theory, Niebuhr holds that the ideal of society is justice. The surprise, however, is shortlived. Indeed, according to Niebuhr, the pursuit of this ideal is necessarily so fraught with "the assertion of interest against interest" that it compels societies "to sanction self-assertion . . . , social conflict and violence."[27] Justice itself can be maintained only through the precarious "balance of power," the setting and dividing of mankind into self-neutralizing, mutually hostile camps.[28] One wonders what sort of justice it is that is based on the balance of power, coercion and social conflict;

25. *Ibid.*, p. 267.
26. *Ibid.*, pp. 261–2.
27. *Ibid.*, p. 259.
28. "In the field of collective behavior the force of egoistic passion is so strong that the only harmonies possible are those which manage to neutralize this force through balance of power, through mutual defences against its inordinate expression" (*An Interpretation of Christian Ethics*, p. 140). Niebuhr condemns international co-operation as "acceptance of traditional injustices and . . . preference of subtler types of coercion" (*ibid.*, p. 233). "Marxian philosophy is more true than pacifism" in that the former "has good reason to insist that the elimination of coercion is a futile ideal but that the rational use of coercion is a possible achievement which may save society" (*ibid.*, p. 235).

in the pursuit of which society "is forced . . . to sacrifice a degree of moral purity for political effectiveness."[29] Surely it must be anything but Christian "justice."

For Niebuhr the fact that the conduct of the nations of the world has been immoral weighs too heavily in the scales. Indeed, it weighs so heavily that it tacitly receives a measure of approval from his hand. He insists that "the sentiment of nationality and the authority of the state [are] the ultimate force of cohesion" and therefore society's highest principle.[30] He regards universalism, or the will to extend the social sympathies of individuals to the larger social problems of mankind, as vain and futile. "What lies beyond the nation, [namely] the community of mankind, is too vague to inspire devotion."[31] The Church was once upon a time able to command such a universalist extension of human sympathy. Today, Niebuhr assures us, "the Church . . . no longer possesses [any such] prestige [or] universality."[32] This being the case, he argues, society "must be self-assertive, proud, self-complacent and egotistical."[33] Its "most significant moral characteristic . . . is its hypocrisy . . . [just as] self-deception and hypocrisy is an unvarying element in the moral life of all human beings."[34] By concluding from all this that relations between social groups must be purely political, not ethical, Niebuhr has not only fallaciously deduced an "ought" from an "is," but has repudiated the ethic of Jesus inasmuch as that ethic is relevant for the conduct of society.

This empiricism, and the confirmation of the Hobbesian thesis that the nature of man is egotistic, self-assertive, hypocritical, and necessarily hostile towards other men imply, further, the rejection of the ethic of Jesus on the personal level, however much Niebuhr has proved to be lacking in the courage to pursue his thought to its logical conclusion. Inasmuch as Niebuhr is an instance of Western consciousness, the problem of Western man today is radically different from that of the first three centuries of Christianity. At that time the personality of Jesus was struggling to invade Western man's ethos. Today, after twenty centuries of "Christian" existence, that ethos is regrouping its forces and struggling to repel, and utterly to banish, that holy personality.

29. *Ibid.*, p. 244.

30. "The unqualified character of this devotion [nationalist sentiment] is the very basis of the nation's power and of the freedom to use the power without moral restraint" (*ibid.*, p. 91).

31. *Ibid.*

32. *Ibid.*

33. *Ibid.* The words are those of "Tyrrell, the Catholic modernist," whom Niebuhr quotes with full approbation.

34. *Ibid.*, p. 95. "The dishonesty of nations is a necessity of political policy if the nation is to gain the full benefit of its double claim upon the loyalty and devotion of the individual, as his own special and unique community and as a community which embodies universal values and ideals. The two claims . . . are incompatible with each other and can be resolved only through dishonesty" (*ibid.*, pp. 95–6). Again, "society . . . merely cumulates the egoism of individuals and transmutes their individual altruism into collective egoism. . . . For this reason, no group acts from purely unselfish or even mutual intent and politics is therefore bound to be a contest of power" ("Human Nature and Social Change," *Christian Century*, 1933, p. 363).

Christianity in a Non-Christian Country: Problems of Japanese Christianity Since 1549

P. KEN IMAI

WHENEVER European Christianity has been carried to a non-Christian country, it has been faced with the double problem of its identification both with the political system and with the culture of the Western world. In Europe, throughout the Middle Ages and long after the Reformation, the Church was closely related to the State. It was able to influence state policy and was subject, in turn, to a measure of state control. Hence, when missionaries came, for example from the West to the East, they brought with them their understanding of Church-State relations. In the minds of the people whom they had come to evangelize, they were regarded not only as ambassadors of Christ, but also as representatives of their own countries, whether they liked it or not. Some missionaries used this situation to bring advantage to their church; but on the whole, they recognized the obligation to save the best interests of the people to whom they had come to proclaim the Gospel, while remaining loyal to the country of their birth.

The missionary Church in a non-Christian country was also faced with the problem of vastly dissimilar traditions which differed not only in degree but in kind from those of Western Europe, but which could not be destroyed nor changed overnight. Further, the missionaries had to ask whether it was right to destroy the culture of the "heathen" before the latter could accept Christ as their Saviour. The Church was able frequently to introduce Western culture to its new home because such countries were eager to absorb Western teachings. New Christians and their leaders tended to feel that, unless the old culture was entirely thrown off in a complete changeover to the Western, Western culture and Christianity (unfortunately the two were regarded as closely connected) would merely remain accessories to their life and traditional ways. But was this really the case, particularly with Japan?

In 1959, the Christian Church in Japan celebrated the centenary of the beginning of Protestant evangelism and the re-opening of Roman Catholic Church work after an interval of three hundred years following the persecution in the sixteenth century. The record shows that the progress of the Church in Japan has not been rapid. Missionaries and Japanese Church leaders have studied the reasons for this slowness, but they have not yet arrived at a satisfactory conclusion.

This article is an attempt to search, in the light of history, for some of the causes which have hindered the growth of the Church. Special attention will be given to the problems of Church and State and of Religion and Culture.

The history of Japan, since the coming of the faith to that country in the early sixteenth century, may be divided into three periods, which will be considered in turn.

I. The Introduction of Christianity

This was brought about by the Roman Catholic Jesuit priest, Francis Xavier, in the year 1549, over four hundred years ago. The great event has been described dramatically as follows:

> In June of the year 1549, the same year in which the first Prayer Book of the Anglican Communion was published, a Chinese pirate ship appeared in the bay of Kagoshima at the southernmost end of Japan. As the ship moved toward the port city of Kagoshima, those on board could see before them the volcanic island of Sakura-jima—that is to say, Cherry Island—rising to its smoking summit of 4,000 feet in the middle of the bay. It was too late for the cherry blossoms that give the island its name, but the sight is breath-taking, and one would like to know what impression it made on at least one voyager on board, and whether his ardent Spanish soul appreciated the fact that even nature here might play a dramatic role.[1]

Francis Xaxier not only brought the Gospel of the ruler of the Universe, but he also carried the endorsement of the King of Portugal, the head of the great empire which covered the seas of the world at that time. The Japanese landlords raised their eyes from their continual domestic wars and became aware of the existence of this great power in the West. At about the same time, a sailor was rescued from the wreckage of a Spanish ship and was found to be carrying a gun, a mysterious and extremely effective weapon which could kill from a distance without actually touching the victim, and which was completely unknown to the Japanese heretofore.

For various reasons, political or economic, technical or cultural, the Japanese government and the landlords were attracted to the Western countries and were curious to know more about them.[2] Shogun Oda Nobunaga not only co-operated with the Christian missionaries but also helped and trusted the converted Japanese landlords. Oda Nobunaga's successor, Toyotomi Hideyoshi, was an aggressive, domineering and realistic character. His ambition was not only to gain complete control of the whole of Japan but to conquer Korea, China, and possibly the Philippine Islands. The favour he showed to the Christian missionaries was suspected as arising more from political reasons than from genuine spiritual appreciation, and he did indeed wish to buy more guns and two warships from Portugal. On the other hand, he also realized the strength of the recently organized Japanese

1. Kenneth Heim, of Virginia Theological Seminary, in *The Living Church*, 24 May 1959, p. 10.

2. During this period the West was represented mainly by Spain and Portugal. The Dutch entered Oriental trade about fifty years later, and England about one hundred years later, but neither country was Roman Catholic and both refrained from evangelistic works. However, the Dutch did introduce advanced medicine, astronomy and mathematics, which the Japanese called "Ran-gaku," or "Dutch studies."

Church and rightly surmised that this strength might prove to be a great obstacle to his political ambitions if a time of conflict and opposing interests should arrive. The Jesuit fathers were not blind to the Shogun's underlying motives but, in turn, took advantage of his attitude to forward the spread of Christianity, according to their own conception of the State's connection with the Church.

Some analysis must be made of the complicated relationships between the State, trade, and evangelism of that period. With the advance of science, especially astronomy and geography, European countries were enthusiastic about the discoveries of new continents, and subsequent colonization of these distant lands. This movement, in turn, stimulated trade. Great wealth was in store for the brave merchant who dared to go to sea.

For the Roman Catholic Church, it was also a splendid opportunity to send missionaries to spread the Gospel among the heathen, made more welcome by the fact that the church was in need of new supporters. The Christian missionaries were always at the new frontiers, the merchants profited by this movement, and European countries satisfied their desire to conquer new worlds. These three groups, the Church, the merchants, and the State, were very closely co-ordinated. The Church wished to enforce her authority in the new country which had been discovered by the State and the merchants. The merchants wanted the profits of trade with the new country discovered by the State and evangelized by the Church, and at the same time to receive her spiritual care. The State was building the foundations of colonization of the new country, a development which was tied up with trade and had been prepared by the missionaries. The benefit to these three groups was mutual.

Christian evangelism was extremely successful in Japan at this time. By 1582, only thirty-three years after the beginning of organized missionary effort, there were two hundred churches built and 150,000 converts made to Christianity. This provides a sharp contrast with the later renewal of Protestant evangelism when, over a period of fifty-three years (1859–1912), Christians numbered only 79,000.

Why was early Roman Catholic evangelism so successful? In the first place, when Christianity was brought to Japan, that country was undergoing a period of domestic war and the power of traditional religion had deteriorated through its attempt to gain support from the politically powerful landlord class, and by its neglect of the suffering masses. The simplicity of Christian dogma, the strong Catholic faith in a future life and Christian eschatology appealed to the tired minds of the Japanese. Secondly, Christian charitable works, care of medical cases and relief of the suffering won the trust of the people. Thirdly, the Christian church was the only religious, organized body to appeal to the Japanese people spiritually, physically, and individually, or socially.

However, the period during which the early Christian church enjoyed prestige did not continue long. Shogun Toyotomi Hideyoshi suddenly issued

an edict condemning the missionaries and their teachings, ordering them to leave Japan in 1587, thirty-eight years after Xavier's landing. The persecution of the Christian church which followed was severe and brutal and it continued in varying intensity for almost three hundred years. At the end of that time, very few Christians remained.

Why did this happen? Why did Christian evangelism fail? For one thing, it was considered to be harmful to national tradition. The evangelistic tactics of the Jesuits in Japan, which included public debate with Buddhists and Shintoists, challenged the national tradition and, through it, the existing political structure. This aroused serious opposition from the government of the country. Unlike the extremely understanding and sympathetic Italian Jesuit, Valignano, the Portuguese priests, on the whole, were strongly prejudiced against Japanese culture and politics. They were especially hostile toward heathen religion. Father Cabral, who sometimes was a co-worker with Father Valignano, once claimed of the Japanese and their education: ". . . for once they [Japanese] became expert Theologians, being of a proud disposition and still young in the Faith, they would be readily prone to divide the law of Christ into heresies as numerous as the sects which their ancestors had evolved from the false doctrine of Buddha." Cabral maintained that

> it was essential for Europeans to keep the whip hand of the Japanese and to treat them as inferiors, since once their fundamentally proud, arrogant, and sensual nature was allowed to get the upper hand, they would prove quite unamenable to the discipline of their erstwhile mentors and intolerant of all restraints whether human or divine.[3]

Such opinions left little room for tolerance of native traditions.

Secondly, there was disunity among Christian bodies. Spanish Franciscans arrived in 1585 from the Philippines. In spite of the union between the Spanish and Portuguese monarchies under the sceptre of King Philip II (1580), the two colonial empires continued to be separately administered and completely independent of each other. The missionary attempts in China and Japan were handled by Portugal at first, as well as the trade, but Spain took advantage of political development and formally granted patronage to the Spanish Franciscans, entitling them to continue religious activities not only in the Philippines but also in China and Japan, the underlying thought being the extension of Spanish trade. Toyotomi Hideyoshi, the Shogun of the period, was also anxious to expand his influence to the Philippine Islands and open trade with the Spanish who had conquered Luzon. He therefore gave permission to the Spanish Franciscans to work among the Japanese, in spite of the edict proclaimed the previous year. The Jesuits and Franciscans found that their conflicting policies on the evangelizing of Japan led to frustrations from time to time.

Furthermore, the thoughtless talk of Spanish traders hinted that the

3. C. R. Boxer, *The Christian Century in Japan, 1549–1650* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1951), p. 86.

traders and priests were the advance guard of expeditions which would conquer distant countries, including Japan.

Finally, in 1640, Tokugawa Shogun placed the country in tight seclusion from which it did not emerge for over two hundred years. This failure of evangelism could further be blamed upon misunderstandings and ignorance on the side both of the Church and of the Japanese state. However, perhaps one of the strongest reasons was the failure of the Japanese leaders to further their political ambitions toward Portugal or Spain through the medium of the Christian missionaries.

There is evidence that the countries of the West took advantage of the Church's favoured position to advance trade with Oriental countries. On the other hand, when the Christian missionaries were persecuted, the Western states made little effort to support them. The Church had been merely used as a bargaining point in politics, so to speak.

The Christian body of the Japanese, headed by foreign missionaries, stood against political tyranny with genuine faith in Christ. This was truly a beautiful, outstanding and impressive witness of faith. Christianity was the redemptive power through the fire of persecution of that period. It is a remarkable fact that, although outwardly the entire Christian population was eliminated, yet the faith was kept alive under cover during the two hundred years of the edict. In spite of the failure to maintain itself in Japan, Christianity showed strong evidence of genuine faith in God.

Guns and Christ were brought to Japan in the early sixteenth century. Both remained, in different ways, and with a different effect upon the nation.

II. The Second Contact with Christianity

This period began in 1859, three hundred and ten years after Xavier's landing, and lasted until 1939. The first missionary was an Episcopalian, the Reverend C. M. Williams, who began work shortly after Admiral Perry of the United States Navy successfully signed an agreement with the Japanese government to open three ports to American trade.

Admiral Perry had displayed the military (more precisely, the naval) strength of the United States to the Japanese Shogun by anchoring four steel ships in Shimoda Harbour, and had fired demonstration shots from their cannon. Half threatened and half attracted, the Japanese people recognized this new Western power. There was much indecision in Japan over Perry's proposal for trade from the three ports but progressive opinion won the battle and the nation welcomed the re-introduction of Western civilization overwhelmingly. In the eyes of the Japanese, the Western nations (represented this time by the Americans) were seen as a vigorous and adventurous people, equipped with advanced technology.

However, Mr. Williams had to face open hostility or rejection whenever he began to tell about Christ. Under the influence of the edict enforced during the past two hundred years, Christianity had been branded as a

harmful religion. The new missionary waited seven years for his first baptism and eleven for his first confirmation.

Mr. Williams, who was consecrated Bishop of Edo in 1866, proclaimed the Christian Gospel openly and publicly after the overthrow of the Tokugawa Shogun, together with the edict of over two hundred years, had restored the freedom of religion. For example, he taught English, established girls' schools, hospital work and college education. When he had won the trust of the people, he was able to introduce the Christian Gospel, accompanied by Western civilization. In the period between 1859 and 1939, beginning with Bishop Williams' Episcopal mission to Japan until the Second World War, the Church made great progress in organizing and establishing its branch of the Anglican communion in Japan. This was named the Nippon Sei-ko-kwai ("Holy Catholic Church of Japan"). Bishop Williams was well-known for his saintly character, through which the people were enabled to understand Christ better.

The Episcopal Church in the United States, the Church of England (represented by the work of both S.P.G. and C.M.S.), the Anglican Church of Canada, and the Australian Church sent their missionaries and financial support generously. Bishops were appointed among these foreign missionaries, and along with mission priests governed the Church. Japanese priests were ordained and supported by foreign mission funds, but they were often under the impression that they were hired by an organization of Western missionary societies rather than acting under any indigenous authority.

There were efforts among Church leaders of all Christian denominations during that period to carry out a literal translation of established organizations of the Western Church which had originally taken centuries of history to become established. Japanese church architecture, church music, and liturgy were definitely Western. Good imitations of foreign church architecture were successfully transferred to church building in Japan in spite of the entirely different cultural backgrounds and climate of Japan and the West.

The Roman Catholic Church taught Latin anthems and sang Mass in Latin. Their church architecture was medieval in style. Converts were encouraged to memorize Latin prayers without a great deal of knowledge as to their meaning, a practice which fostered a feeling among the Japanese that their words held some magical power. Some puritans forced their converts to burn their ancestral monuments, claiming that they confused the religion. In their place, pieces of paper, upon which were written the words of Holy Scripture, were fastened to the walls of the home.

The Christian churches were the channels through which the Japanese could receive new thoughts and ideas of the West. Without making too much effort to approach and understand the people, the Church found the people came to her themselves. There was no major challenge from Buddhism or Shintoism, unless the problem involved national policy. There was little friction between two completely different cultures because Japan and her people were ready to absorb Western culture overwhelmingly. There were

few problems between the Church and State because the Church was still the minority and the State was peaceful and friendly toward the West. Christian missionary work of that period took for granted the use of Western civilization for its introduction, but it was a most charming bait to attract the Japanese people. At that stage, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, this method had the greatest meaning and succeeded in speeding the spread of Christianity among the Japanese. Under the influence of nineteenth-century realism, the stress of Christian evangelism in the reformed churches was placed on Christian ethical teaching. There must be a sharp distinction between the Christian Gospel or life and ethical teachings or philosophical contemplation in any age.

It is rather strange and regrettable to observe that there was little study done on Japanese culture or character-building among Japanese Christian leaders, for most of them were too busy introducing the new European theology to meet the challenge of Oriental religion and culture. The preaching of the Church was often beyond the understanding of the general public, even though it satisfied the more sophisticated preacher. The majority of the priests and ministers of Japanese origin who were over fifty years of age had been educated and had served in this missionary church of Japan. They were brought up in the Church which was well protected, socially and financially. Then the war broke off ties with the mother churches. All foreign bishops and missionaries were forced to return to their own countries and all financial support was terminated. The administration of the Japanese Church was put into a state of confusion and suffered severely from lack of leadership and financial aid. During and after the war, the Japanese Church elected its own bishops and other authorities, while priests and native pastors took over vacancies left by the missionaries all over the country. Financially speaking, they did not get sufficient support from their congregations, chiefly because the latter were not well instructed in Christian stewardship.

During the war, the military-minded government supported the national religion, Shinto, and its worship and teaching became compulsory in the schools. The government also required all Protestant denominations to be united as one body in order that Christian power could more easily be incorporated with national policy. The Nazarene Church (an extremely evangelical denomination) was strongly opposed to Shinto worship and was forced by the government to disband its organization. The Salvation Army was another victim of pressure and it, too, was subsequently dissolved.

The Nippon Sei-ko-kwai (Anglican Communion in Japan) refused to unite with other Protestant groups merely for political convenience, although some individuals did so. Consequently, the Church was not allowed to organize itself in deaneries or dioceses. Large meetings were frowned upon and Japanese bishops were tortured in prison by the secret police. However, this persecution did much to strengthen the Anglican Church, especially within itself.

In this period of Christian evangelism in Japan, we can observe once more the recurring problems of religion and culture, and of Church and State. At the beginning of the period, Christian evangelism faced tremendous difficulties under the Shoguns' edict. However, missionary activity gradually became easier as the Japanese nation became aware of the highly civilized Western countries and grew anxious to learn from them. To Japanese minds, Christianity belongs to the West and is probably accepted as an essentially humanistic ideology from Europe. For instance, the concept of sin or the doctrine of redemption has never appeared in Oriental religion as it does in Christianity. Unfortunately, evangelism has made little effort to tackle this aspect of Oriental culture and the depth of the Oriental mind.

The main effort of evangelism by the missionaries was aimed at strongly influencing the leaders of the country, as did early Christianity in the Roman empire. It was reasoned that if the missionaries could give spiritual guidance to the royal family, and perhaps even to the Emperor himself, the whole nation would follow the example of their leaders and become converted to Christianity, as history had shown in the past. However, this had not happened during the past hundred years, partly because the national religion of Shintoism was too strong and also because there was no means of approaching the royal family. On the other hand, there was an overnight change to many Western customs—for example, the replacement of sandals by leather shoes, and of sitting upon a cushion on the floor by the use of Western furniture.

As in the earlier period, Christian missionaries were often frustrated by political developments. The Japanese state had long desired imperial expansion of the country, the adoption of new weapons such as cannon, and the establishment of a large army and navy. However, this ambition to become an imperial power was delayed at least three hundred years, while European countries were building up colonial empires with great success. Conscientious missionaries and Japanese Church leaders in the latter period were strongly opposed to imperialist state policy but the majority of Church leaders were forced to compromise with it.

The nation experienced four wars, the Sino-Japanese War (1894–95), Russo-Japanese War (1904–05), World War I (1917–18), World War II (1941–45), during this second period of contact with Christianity. Meeting national crises solidified the unity of the nation and offered opportunities to nourish nationalism.

During the period of the first Sino-Japanese War, the Church did not experience much difficulty with the State because the number of Christians was very small, but it was obvious that the Church opposed State policy during the Russo-Japanese War in 1904–05. Uchimura Kanzo, the leader of the Mu-Kyo-Kwai (non-denominational church) was openly against the war. He wrote articles in the newspaper, or for his own Church periodical, about his Christian anti-war convictions. He was highly educated and an influential man among the intellectuals of that time. Another church

leader who strove for peace was the Bishop Nicholas of the Russian Orthodox Church who, when he was asked by a Japanese patriot whether he would pray God for victory to his own country or victory for Japan which he was working to evangelize, made the truly Christian answer that a Japanese Christian might pray for the victory of Japan but that he himself would pray for the early cessation of war.

In World War I, Japan signed a treaty with England engaging herself in war but her duties were minor, consisting mainly of patrolling with the Allies' merchant freighters in the Indian Ocean, or even as far as the Mediterranean. Enormous exports of war supplies and merchandise helped Japanese business to gain glorious prosperity for the nation, but the people could not realize the serious nature of the problem. The circumstances were of the "fire-on-the-other-side-of-the-river" variety; that is to say, the incident was taking place at a spot too distant to cause immediate concern. Christian leaders also failed to take direct responsibility for dealing with the ethical issues of the war.

At the time of World War II, many Christian leaders spoke openly against militarism and state policy, thereby losing their social standing and being persecuted, directly or indirectly. The Japanese churches were unable to organize to act as a whole in protest against national policy. The relationship between Church and State was not a happy one because the Church was still too young to claim a recognized position in the nation. They were compelled to maintain themselves without any assistance in keeping their own faith.

III. After World War II

When the war ceased in 1945, it was remarkable that every single Japanese church was crowded with people eager to hear the Gospel. This was the third upsurge of Christianity in Japan.

General MacArthur's successful peace treaty with the Japanese government opened the new age of atomic energy. The Japanese were again fearful and yet eager to know more about the Western power which produced the atomic bomb. They hoped to find the real spiritual backbone of the West through the Church. This was obviously the wrong attitude with which to approach the Church but they did not see the distinction between religion and policy, or Christianity and civilization. Christian leaders failed to observe closely this reaction of the masses, and to take this opportunity to spread in their minds the desire to lead the life of Christ. The majority of Christian leaders reverted to the familiar techniques of their missionary period for spreading the Christian gospel, such as English Bible classes, English conversation classes, Sunday schools, and the teaching of Christian ethics.

However, this was not enough to meet the needs of the victims of disaster. It was with great regret that Japanese Church leaders faced and realized the fact that their teachings were not ready to cope with the spiritual

crisis of the nation immediately after World War II. While the Communists were working and fighting to provide bread for the poor on a vast scale, Christian charities were insufficient to give any great competition.

The Japanese imperial hierarchy prior to World War II might be compared to the apex of a pyramid. The first aim of the Church, of course, was to hit the top of the pyramid, that is to say, to convert the Emperor and the royal family to Christianity. In actual fact, the Church hit the lower part of the pyramid. She spent enermous energy and patience to convert educated intellectuals to Christianity and, through them, she widely influenced the nation.

With the American army of occupation came the introduction of democracy, with an epoch-making change in the educational system and its curriculum. The emphasis on the rights of the people went to extremes. The masses had more and more to say about politics, as well as other matters, until the people began to believe that they were always in the right. This development has forced a change in the Christian strategy of evangelism. The governing power of the nation is dropping from the leaders, who are in the minority, to the broader base of the pyramid, the mass of the people.

When the Church is compelled to face the lower part of the pyramid, she must be aware that it consists of the harder, more conservative element, people who still cling to their old religion, way of thinking and way of living. This in turn brings into focus the urgent problem of the differences of culture and religion between the Oriental and the Occidental. If Christianity wishes to be regarded as a Western religion and wishes to remain Western, there will be very little opportunity to spread in the coming Japan. If the Christian Church would like to become established as a national institution, she must revert to the basic Christian faith, which is more primitive, flexible and dynamic, enabling it to proceed through the Oriental culture barrier.

A new Research Bureau of Evangelism has been organized in the Japanese Christian Council of Churches. It is encouraging to note that a few scholars have already begun surveys of this difficult and yet important problem of relationships between the State and Church, Culture and Religion. I am firmly convinced that they will come forth with clear reasons for the factors which hold back the further progress of Christian evangelism, thereby greatly benefiting the planning of the future evangelism of Japan. Above all, it will have to be made clear that Christianity is not only a teaching of the high morals of the West, but that it is the revelation of God's character and of the force which alone can redeem mankind throughout the world.

Jesus Christ Yesterday: The Historical Basis of the Christian Faith*

E. C. BLACKMAN

In our study of the gospels it is time that reconstruction of the life of Jesus, and not simply of the kerygma of the Church, was taken in hand seriously again. The recent lives by Stauffer[1] and Bornkamm[2] are significant. It was perhaps inevtiable, during the period when form criticism was perfecting its method and justifying its critical presuppositions, that the obligation to compose a life of Jesus should have less attention drawn to it.[3] But now surely we should be prepared to assert that the gospels have been treated long enough as theological productions of the early Church; they should now be handled again as historical sources, even though certain elements in them may have to be labelled "kerygmatic" or "mythological."

The historical element needs re-emphasizing if the total message of the gospel is to be understood and respected, and if legitimate historical criticism is not to become indistinguishable from scepticism. Historical criticism is continually necessary, and without it the existence of a theological faculty is hardly justifiable. The accuracy of many details in the gospel story will continue to be questioned. The difference between the mentality of the first Christians and that of the modern reader in this matter of historical judgment is patent in every chapter, and need not be minimized. But negative judgments on specific passages need not imply scepticism about the basic historical factuality of the gospel narrative. It is advisable to be more positive in affirming this basic historicity—more positive than form criticism on the whole has been.

Form criticism has established itself as a method in gospel study. Its conception of the *Sitz im Leben* is illuminating, and is one way in which the surpra-historical concerns in the Christian tradition may be indicated. But it must not be allowed to divert attention from that large element in the gospels which in *Sitz in Leben Jesu*, and not simply *Sitz im Leben der*

*This article incorporates a large part of the author's inaugural lecture as Professor of New Testament Literature and Exegesis in Emmanuel College, Toronto. It is expected that more material on the same theme will appear in a sequel at a later date.

1. *Jesus: Gestalt und Geschichte* (Berne: Francke, 1957); E.T., *Jesus and His Story* (New York: Knopf, 1960).

2. *Jesus von Nazareth* (3rd ed., Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1959); E.T., *Jesus of Nazareth* (London: Hodder & Stoughton 1960).

3. Note Bornkamm's opening sentence: "No one is any longer in the position to write a life of Jesus" (E.T., p. 13). See also p. 53: "The nature of the sources does not permit us to paint a biographical picture of the life of Jesus against the background of the history of his people and his age. Nevertheless, what these sources do yield as regards the historical facts concerning the personality and career of Jesus is not negligible, and demands careful attention." E. J. Goodspeed will have none of such hesitation; see the Preface to his *Life of Jesus* (New York: Harper, 1950).

ältesten Kirche! It is this element to which this paper is calling attention. We may agree with R. H. Lightfoot that "the historical material is being used for a theological purpose."[4] Yes, but it is that historical material, not the theological purpose, which now needs to have the floodlight turned on it. Even Bornkamm admits that our task is to find the history in the kerygma. Kerygma and history are inextricable in the gospel narrative, and mutually imply one another. Bornkamm goes so far as to affirm that the gospels, though different from ordinary historical writings, "bring before our eyes the historical person of Jesus with the utmost vividness."[5] The essential history must be re-affirmed. Not to do so is to provide a basis for a new Gnosticism and Docetism. The rooting in actual events is inescapable if we are dealing with the Christian gospel; and the significance of the historical may not be ignored or minimized. However baffling the problem thereby created for philosophic explication, as the development of Christian theology bears witness, it is vital to assert that the eternal God *entered time*; that the second person of the Trinity *became man*, a particular man, a Jew in fact. There can be no Christ of faith without a Jesus of history; no kerygma to proclaim as good news apart from concrete events of the ministry and passion of Jesus of Nazareth. It ought to be realized more than it is by Christian apologists and dogmatic theologians that though the truth of the gospel cannot be substantiated by historical evidence, the historical basis of Christian affirmations must be constantly kept in view. If there should arise genuine doubt concerning the historicity of the original events proclaimed as saving events in the New Testament, then the gospel itself is disproved.[6]

If the original proclamation that Jesus is present Messiah, and that in him the end of history has taken place, is to be made believable, the historical framework must be indicated; otherwise Jesus remains no more than a Messianic hope or ideal. Now the Christian faith is not based on an ideal,

4. *The Gospel Message of St. Mark* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1950), p. 16. Lightfoot is more prepared than some form critics to allow for the historical element. But note the following (p. 47): "He [Mark] is not interested in the Lord's biography as such: he is only interested in it insofar as the traditions help him to set forth what he understands to be the Gospel. . . . The evangelist has incidentally given us some most precious traits of the Jesus of History . . . because he is still comparatively close to the actual facts. But we shall best understand his book if we regard both it and the little sections by means of which it is so largely built up, as an illustration, exposition and demonstration of the Church's gospel."

5. *Op. cit.*, p. 24. Bornkamm fully admits that the gospels, for all their limitations as historical documents, do yield valuable information about Jesus as a historical figure, who made his mark on his environment and so impressed men that they could not ignore him but had to take up a definite attitude to him. He was a man of his age and yet apart from it. This was his unique "authority" (Mark 1:22), which must be accepted as a characteristic of the historical Jesus as he stood before his contemporaries, even though its full significance carries us beyond the purely historical (cf. pp. 53ff.).

6. See T. A. Roberts' acute study, *History and Christian Apologetic* (London: SPCK, 1960), especially the section on "The Historical Element in Christianity," where he writes: "Although the truth of the statement, that 'in Jesus God was reconciling the world unto himself,' is not directly entailed by the truth of the historical statements about the life and ministry of Jesus, *nevertheless there is some relation between them*, and it is surely this relation which has become at once both the ground of the claim that Christianity is a uniquely historical religion and the source of confusion about the legitimate appeal to history which it makes" (p. 144; italics mine).

but on an ideal realized, in actual events. The very first proclamation was fully aware of this, and spoke of historical events leading up to the Resurrection (Act 2:22–24).

Before proceeding to discuss this in more detail the challenge arising out of Rudolph Bultmann's exposition of the New Testament must be briefly considered. No New Testament scholar has done more than Bultmann to maintain the relevance of New Testament presuppositions to the current intellectual debate, and to the whole of man's thought about himself. We must however pronounce his theology in the last resort unsatisfactory, because it remains insensitive to the significance of history. The possibility of eternal truth—the transcendent God—being at all involved in historical events is unthinkable for Bultmann. It would mean involvement in the morass of relativism, where no firm standing ground, *i.e.*, no absolute truth or authority, is available. In recoil from this, Bultmann risks denying the distinctive paradox of Christianity, that of the Word made flesh, the eternal in time. He does not argue for eternal truths of reason against contingent truths of history, but for divine, authoritative truth in the biblical sense —access to God as supreme Lord of man, in relation to whom alone man has truth, security and what Bultmann calls *Existenz*, *i.e.*, status as a free person who is more than a product of evolution, a mere fleeting appearance on stream of history.

Bultmann is concerned about a real issue here, and stands out as an opposite extreme from existentialists of the Sartre school. Is man a mere occurrence, he asks, or a true person? Is man simply a specimen of a genus (like animals) or a real individual? The achievement of personality in this sense depends on being brought into this awareness of God, which the Christian gospel is intended to make possible (and which is actually made possible by the function of *preaching*). But being thus confronted with God —or, rather, knowing God as one who quickens man to the status of personal being—does not in Bultmann's experience bring in any consideration of history or time. Historical events are transient and really meaningless, irrelevant as far as man's true existence is concerned. Man achieves true existence *in relation to God*. Thus Bultmann refuses to take history seriously *in order to take God seriously*, and like a typical German makes an "Either-Or" of it! We should reject this "Either-Or," and turn it into a "Both-And." We must think of God and man, not in the indeterminate way in which Bultmann seems to (it is difficult to see what colour and content the divine-human encounter has for him), but maintaining the paradox that God came so close to man in Christ as actually to be *in* history and *in* flesh.[7]

Bultmann speaks of man's historicity, meaning thereby man's involvement

7. Cf. J. McIntyre, *The Christian Doctrine of History* (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1960), p. 79f., where the incarnation is described as God's indentification of himself with history, and we are warned against conceiving the saving acts of God as mere interventions, as series of points as it were on the line of temporal sequence, after which God completely withdraws and leaves the world to carry on its course. "Once the Incarnation has taken place there is no question of God stepping out of history, or of His contracting out of this once-for-all identification."

in a present which is determined by its past and is responsible for its fture. This is part of the radical Christian understanding of human nature. Christianity also enables man to attain the freedom he needs, but cannot bestow upon himself, by its proclamation of the grace of God. Man thus becomes a new man, no longer fettered by his past (the "old" man, in the grip of sin). This is the individual application of the message about Christ as the eschatological event, *i.e.*, the divine action setting an end to the "old" world.[8] A correct approach to the problem of the life of Christ and his participation in human experience would appear to be made possible on these assumptions. But Bultmann disappoints us again; he leaves Christ exclusively on the Godward side of reality, and does not conceive of his truly entering the human sphere.

> The eschatological event . . . is not to be understood as a dramatic cosmic catastrophe, but as happening within history, beginning with the appearance of Jesus Christ, and in continuity with this occurring again and again in history, but *not as the kind of historical development which can be confirmed by any historian.* It becomes an event repeatedly in preaching and faith. Jesus Christ is the eschatological event, not as an established fact of past time but as repeatedly present, as addressing you and me here and now in preaching.[9]

In this passage the words from "beginning with" seem to dissolve away what truth there was in the statement that Christ is "within history." How much—or how little—does this "within" imply? Hardly enough to tally with New Testament testimony about the reality of Christ's human life.[10] Certainly Bultmann is trying to be serious about God's action in Christ for man's redemption (in Bultmann's terms, man's freedom from his past). But this God is apparently not one who really makes contact with the human sphere. There is is an implicit docetism in Bultmann's statement.[11] He can bring himself to call Christ's coming a historical event, but will not stay to give that its proper significance; he rushes on to describe it as an eschatological or eternal event, not "in" history, but in salvation-history.

This indifference to the life of Jesus as a historical event must be pronounced out of line with the New Testament, and we must join issue with Bultmann here, even if we are prepared to allow his radical attitude to the genuineness of many of the recorded sayings of Jesus, and his view of the resurrection as an experience of the disciples rather than of Jesus himself. We

8. Cf. *History and Eschatology* (Edinburgh: University Press, 1957), pp. 149–151. "The radical understanding of the historicity of man has appeared in Christianity. . . . Real autobiography arose for the first time within Christianity. From this origin the understanding of the human being as historical became effective in the west, and it remained vivid even when it was divorced from Christian faith and secularised as in the modern philosophy of existence which finds its extreme form in Sartre" (p. 149).

9. *Ibid.*, p. 151f. Italics mine.

10. While Bultmann can speak of the appearance of a determinate person in a determinate history, on the whole (and certainly in *History and Eschatology*, the Gifford Lectures which one is entitled to regard as a considered utterance), he leaves the impression of not taking Jesus' earthly existence seriously. Nor is it a sufficient defence to argue that Bultmann's understanding of history is oriented particularly to the historical understanding of existence rather than to the history of the past.

11. This may be the legacy of Lessing and of the notion that eternal truths of reason have no connexion with contingent truths of history and that the realm of the absolute never impinges on the realm of the relative.

must affirm more particularly than Bultmann does that Christ had genuine historical experience. There is real history and much actual reminiscence in the gospel narrative underneath the theological motives and interpretation.[12]

We move on to a consideration of this basis in history and of its effect on our understanding of the gospel itself. Dr. C. H. Dodd has familiarized us with the kerygmatic and didactic traditions of the primitive Church. We may also speak of the developing liturgical tradition. All this has been much discussed in recent years. For our present purpose we are calling attention to the historical element in the thought of the first Christians. The publication of the Gospel of Mark—to say nothing of the "many" referred to in Luke's opening verse—requires this assumption of a historical interest among the believers. Why should it be assumed that they were devoid of such an interest, or that there was no memory of certain incidents having happened in such and such a way, and had such and such a result, during the ministry of the Lord? It need not be argued that this was a *main* interest of the early believers. But it is quite gratuitous to suppose they were insensitive to Christ's life and death as plain historical event, as well as act of God.[13] To admit that a full historical account cannot be given of the life and ministry of Jesus is one thing; but this is not tantamount to arguing that he was not a true historical figure.

Even if we admit that there is truth in K. L. Schmidt's theory[14] that the framework of chronological and geographical detail in Mark's Gospel was no more than a construction of Mark's mind, we still have the contents of the pericopae to evaluate. The question is: Is that content, whether of a particular pericope, or of the whole number in a gospel, theologically motivated, or historically? It may be both, of course. What we are concerned to argue is that there is a sufficient amount of material in the gospels which is historical, even if also capable of theological interpretation; historical in the sense of being in its present form and place in that particular gospel because it actually happened or was spoken so.

12. Bornkamm is less negative. He can write (*op. cit.*, p. 179): "The story of Jesus does not end with his death. It begins anew with his resurrection." It is true that he adds (p. 180): "The event of Christ's resurrection from the dead, his life and his eternal reign, are things removed from historical scholarship." In general, however, he affirms more definitely than Bultmann that the gospel tradition does give access to the real, original Jesus. Although it is shot through with interpretation and adaptation to the needs of the churches, nevertheless, "*precisely in this way* of transmitting and recounting, the person and work of Jesus, in their unmistakable uniqueness and and distiveness, are shown forth with an originality which again and again far exceeds and disarms even all believing understandings and interpretations. Understood in this way, the primitive tradition of Jesus is *brim full* of history" (p. 26; italics mine). Cf. note 5, above.

13. See T. W. Manson, "The life of Jesus: some tendencies in present-day research," in W. D. Davies and D. Daube (eds.), *The Background of the New Testament and its Eschatology* (Cambridge: University Press, 1956), pp. 211–221. Cf. C. F. D. Moule in A. J. B. Higgins (ed.), *New Testament Essays* (Manchester: University Press, 1959, pp. 165–179); J. Jeremias, *Das Problem des historischen Jesus* (Stuttgart, Calwer Verlag, 1960). Bultmann's scepticism is modified in more recent scholars who have been influenced by him. Cf. articles by Käsemann ("Das Problem des historischen Jesus," *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*, 1954, pp. 125–153) and Fuchs ("Die Frage nach dem historischen Jesus," *ibid.*, 1956, pp. 210–229).

14. Expounded in *Der Rahmen der Geschichte Jesu* (Berlin: Trowitzsch, 1919).

The general scheme of Mark is usually envisaged in terms of Jesus' Messiahship or divine Sonship, gradually emerging from secrecy to common knowledge; and some progression is detected, with the incident at Caesarea Philippi as a kind of centre of gravity in this gospel. Does that gradual revelation in Jesus' ministry correspond to an actual historical development, or is it, like Schmidt's "framework," an invention of Mark's; in other words, is it literary and theological rather than historical?

This question has to be seriously discussed. My plea is that if we affirm the historical element to be just as probable a reason as the theological, this may be taken as a serious answer. But of course it has to be argued; *a priori* assertion is not enough; *a posteriori* evidence has to be produced.[15] The answer cannot be given as readily as it might have been, say, in 1900, when the two assured results of source criticism semed to be that at least Mark and the sayings source Q were a reliable basis for reconstructing a modern interpretation of Jesus—Mark for the historical outline and Q for the teaching.[16]

When we start handling the gospels critically with a view to reconstructing the life of Jesus, the problem of the "framework" posed by Schmidt, and by form criticism of which he was a pioneer, has to be squarely faced. Do our reliable data consist of no more than isolated incidents and bits of the teaching of Jesus? Is there no value at all in the "frameworks" which the four evangelists have provided? Consequent upon this, certain other possibilities call with some urgency for consideration.

(*a*) Can we construct a better framework on our own? Every "life" of Jesus of course attempts this, whether with a conservative or a radical treatment of the gospels. But it is good if such reconstructions carry with them the realization that no modern interpretation can do better than was done in what Dodd has called "the workshop" of the first generation of Christians. Ultimately we must be humble enough to say "No" to this question; we cannot construct a better framework for ourselves, even with the aid of our increasing familiarity with the Judaism contemporary with the New Testament (e.g., that of the Qumran Community).

(*b*) Can we discern any *historical* development in the fragments of the life and teaching of Jesus? Probably we may venture a "Yes" to this, along the lines, for example, of Dodd's article referred to above (note 15).

(*c*) Can we discern any *theological* development in the fragments?

(*d*) Can we discern any development in Jesus' own self-consciousness? (This question is closely allied to the previous one.) In other words, is there any central regulative idea which links the units that have come down to us, and creates harmony among them? As an example we might note one which

15. Cf. C. H. Dodd's reply to Schmidt, originally published in 1932 in *Expository Times* and reprinted in *New Testament Studies* (Manchester: University Press, 1953), pp. 1–11.

16. Cf. the use of Mark in F. C. Burkitt, *The Gospel History and its Transmission* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1906), and of Q in A. Harnack, *The Sayings of Jesus* (London: Williams & Norgate, 1908).

has come to the fore in New Testament scholarship in this century, namely, the idea of the Kingdom of God, whether "realised" (Otto and Dodd) or "inaugurated" (J. A. T. Robinson)—or, to take earlier examples, Wrede's theory of the Messianic secret in Mark, or Schweitzer's "thoroughgoing eschatology," which he argues is really historical in the sense of being imbedded in the very purpose of Jesus and not a mere literary construction like Wrede's theory, or like the psychologizing of many modern lives.[17]

(*e*) Alternatively, is there in fact no means of inter-relating the fragmentary gospel material? In that case we should have to be content with the kerygma of the first Christian congregations after the resurrection, and with trying to elucidate that, instead of wasting time composing lives of Jesus? This is the course taken by much recent scholarship, but the aim of this paper is to erect a road-block precisely here.

(*f*) We may ask, finally, whether it is sufficient to speak of the impression of the personality of Jesus, his ego, his uniqueness, and so forth. This is an emphasis made not only in many of the "liberal" lives (especially in Glover's *Jesus of History*) but also most recently by Bornkamm, who speaks of the mastery with which Jesus could dominate a situation.[18] He bestrode his narrow world like a Colossus. The same point has been made in a recent book by Paul Althaus.[19] This factor may not be sufficient in itself. The more proper formulation of the question would be: How much, if anything, is there in this argument?

The radical treatment of Mark which is here considered with reference to K. L. Schmidt's views goes back at least as far as Wrede's *Das Messiasgeheimnis in den Evangelien* (1901). There is a vehement paragraph in Schweitzer's *Quest* where he commends Wrede and protests against the way in which so many studies of the life of Jesus fill in, with imaginative guesses and psychological reconstruction of Jesus' "consciousness," what frankly gaps in Mark which ought to be recognized and left as gaps, instead of being filled in or bridged over by some modern fancy. Here we have an adumbration of Schmidt's theory of isolated pericopae; Schweitzer seems to go so far as to say there is not even a framework.

> Mark knows nothing of any development in Jesus . . . , nothing of any conflict in the mind of Jesus between a spiritual and a popular, political Messianic ideal. . . . Thoroughgoing scepticism and thoroughgoing eschatology are compelling theology to read the Marcan text again with simplicity of mind. The simplicity consists in dispensing with the connecting links which it has been accustomed to discover between the sections of the narrative. . . . The material with which it has been usual to solder the sections together into a life of Jesus will not stand the temperature test. Exposed to the cold air of

17. Cf. A. Schweitzer, *The Quest of the Historical Jesus* (2nd ed., London: A. & C. Black, 1931), p. 335.

18. Cf. *op. cit.*, p. 58: "Every one of the scenes described in the Gospels reveals Jesus' astounding sovereignty in dealing with situations according to the kind of people he encounters."

19. *The So-called Kerygma and the Historical Jesus* (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1959), pp. 26, 74.

critical scepticism it cracks; when the furnace of eschatology is heated to a certain point the solderings melt. In both cases the sections all fall apart. . . . The eschatological solution . . . raises the Marcan account as it stands, with all its disconnectedness and inconsistencies, into genuine history; . . . the literary solution . . . regards the incongruous dogmatic element as interpolated by the earliest Evangelist into the tradition.[20]

Later he writes: "The tradition is incoherent. The reality is incoherent too, since it was only the secret Messianic self-consciousness of Jesus which created alike the events and their connexion."[21] Summing up, we may admit that every attempt to hand on the tradition, or compose a life of Jesus, has in some way to make it coherent, or, if you like, impose an interpretative scheme upon it—from Mark in A.D. 65 to the most recent life or commentary. Mark for example (according to Wrede) set it in the frame of his theory of the Messianic secret, nineteenth-century liberalism in the setting of Jesus' concern for the outcast, etc., twentieth-century biblical theology in the overall reference to the coming of the Kingdom of God.

The vindication of "the Gospels as historical documents"[22] may be called the traditional British position in New Testament criticism. It was consistently exemplified in T. W. Manson's writings, which were never uncritical, and V. Taylor's commentary on Mark (1952) may be quoted as a further example, together with Moule's contribution already referred to, in the volume of New Testament essays in Manson's honour. This is not mere obscurantism and unwillingness to run the risk of being troubled by doubts. The solid point is that though the gospel writers were not historians or biographers they realized that, whatever theological developments might ensue, the beginning of the good news was not theology or myth or vision or mystic drama, but a life, *i.e.*, history. Their business was to make this clear to the readers they hoped to find inside and outside the churches.[23] Being Christians and Jews (apart from Luke) they knew that theology started in history, and needs to be constantly referred back to its historic roots. The Redeemer was not an aeon, or idea, but a man—not an abstract conception like immortality or socialism or evolution, but a human being, Jesus ben Joseph of Nazareth, 7 B.C.–A.D. 30. Not Christ only, but Jesus.

The gospels as we have them contain mythology, which according to Bultmann has to be detached (at whatever risk of spoiling the pattern in which it is closely interwoven) from the essential truth of the gospel if that is to find credence in the modern world. The gospels also contain legendary accretions (e.g., the catching of the fish with the stater in its mouth [Matt. 17:21–24] or the birth stories), which according to liberals can be stripped away. But however much stripping down is done in conformity with critical presuppositions, there is a central figure at the heart of it all who is real and

20. Schweitzer, *op. cit.*, pp. 330, 331, 335.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 393.
22. This of course is the title of a sound (though now forgotten) book by V. H. Stanton (3 vols., Cambridge: University Press, 1903–1920).
23. Mark and Matthew probably wrote for Christian readers, Luke and John for non-Christians.

no myth, no demigod, but the Jesus of history. The gospels, though not biographies, and though containing theology and even mythology, remain in the last analysis works dealing with history rather than with myth, speculation, or imagination.[24]

What then may be reckoned as firm historical ground? Where do we strike the bedrock of actual event and experience, as distinct from theological reflection and missionary adaptation? Generally we may rely on the Marcan outline,[25] allowing to K. L. Schmidt and others that some of it may be Mark's invention, admitting also that chronology was far from being Mark's primary concern. Mark 3:6, for example, appears chronologically impossible (if the events of chapter 3 belong to a relatively early stage of Jesus' ministry), but reveals a tendency to conceive the whole course of events as a passion narrative, overshadowed by the cross, for which there are parallels outside Mark (e.g., Luke 9:51; 13:31–3; and the Johannine motif of Christ's "hour"). In spite of this, however, I value Mark's account as providing a substantial amount of real information about how the Lord's work developed. I would appeal to the fact that Matthew makes no significant alterations in the Marcan outline. Luke and John of course do, and it is not to be assumed that they are wrong and Mark always right. I accept Taylor's assessment of the historical reliability of Mark as discussed in his recent major commentary (pp. 145–149). On the other side I must express suspicion of the treatment of Mark by Dr. A. M. Farrer, whose new theological positivism throws the door to wide open to pure fancy and pattern-weaving.[26]

Among the things that impress me about Mark are details like Mark 4:36, 38; 14:51–2; 15:21. These have no particular point, and are to be interpreted neither as tendentious nor as products of the vivid imagination supposedly characteristic of Mark. The simplest explanation is that they were in the tradition Mark drew upon, and that they got into the tradition

24. John Knox may be cited in support of this statement. He faces the intellectual difficulties of our sources with as vigorous a frankness as Bultmann, and yet insists firmly on the essential historicity, for all his admissions of uncertainty about detail. Cf. *Jesus, Lord and Christ* (New York: Harper, 1958), p. 25: "We can be surer of the fact of his [Christ's] greatness than of the qualities of character in which it consisted." P. Althaus argues (*op. cit.*, pp. 25ff.) that though the gospels are not primarily historical sources they are so secondarily, and that it must be recognized that the kerygma itself points back to historical events which we must examine as the setting of divine action, and not dismiss as a hopeless quest or one which is not a proper object of theological inquiry.

25. As used, e.g., by F. C. Burkitt in *The Gospel History and its Transmission*, and in one of his last books, *Jesus Christ: An Historical Outline* (London: Blackie, 1932), where he is still prepared to treat Mark not only as the source of the other Synoptics but as "a serious historical document in itself" (p. v). Goodspeed also assumes the historical reliability of Mark in his *Life of Jesus*. F. C. Grant in *The Earliest Gospel* (New York-Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury, 1943), p. 50f., regards Mark's outline as the original kerygma; the whole discussion (pp. 34–88) is based on a positive appreciation of form criticism.

26. Cf. *A Study in St. Mark* (Westminster: Dacre Press, 1951), p. 7: "If we allow the evangelist to tell us his own story in his own 'theological' or 'symbolical' way, and do not interpose with premature questions based on our own ideas of historical enquiry, we may be able to discern a genuine history which is communicated to us through the symbolism and not in defiance of it."

because *it happened like that* on the original occasion. These details are not important and can well be omitted, as they were by the two later Synoptic writers. But they give us extra reason to believe that Mark was handling traditional material in which such details were already imbedded; in other words, we have here the element of genuine reminiscence. Mark did not invent these little touches; he is not a literary artist, like Luke. He reproduced the source before him, and these sources give signs of the original eyewitness. We should give some weight also to the consideration that there are many passages where more detail might have been expected (many paradigms, for example); the absence of detail is conspicuous, and redounds to the credit of Mark's honesty.[27]

On the question of whether this eyewitness material or reminiscence is Petrine tradition underlying Mark, I offer no opinion. The view that Peter was Mark's authority dates from the second century, and the internal evidence is not conclusive. Some pericopae may plausibly be interpreted as derived from Peter, notably the account of the healing of his mother-in-law (1:29–31).[28] But there is not enough eyewitness material that is stamped with Peter's characteristics to prove that the tradition is correct.

My case does not rest, however, on the presence of eye-witness material, whether this is ascribed to Peter or to any other roving reporter among Christians of the first generatoin. I am appealing to the general impression of historical concern given by Mark and by the Synoptics as a whole. This may be regarded as too *a priori* an argument. But it strikes me as possessing a weight of its own, and as distinguishable from pure subjectivism. As Coleridge said in his famous discussion of the meaning of inspiration, it is something that "finds me." I may refer also to the opening words of the Gospel of Luke, which certainly profess historical interest and concern, greater that that of Luke's predecessors, in this matter of gospel composition. The opening verses of Luke 3 reveal a concern to relate the events of Jesus' life to their setting in world history as well as in Jewish history. This distinguishes Luke from the other evangelists, even if it does not put him in a category where comparison is possible with the great historians of antiquity. But it also shows Luke's awareness that the salvation-history concerning Jesus of Nazareth is a part of history as a whole. In this Luke is not to be completely differentiated from his fellow evangelists. All of them are conscious of being reporters of real events played out by a real historical person. For all their effort to create a conviction about that person,[29] and to testify to the divine power that operated through him, they are essentially reporters, not free to invent or falsify the data which the tradition of their churches presented as having happened in Galilee and Judaea a generation earlier.

27. On all this see Vincent Taylor, *The Gospel according to St. Mark* (London: Macmillan, 1952), p. 139f.

28. Even Lightfoot, following C. H. Turner, admits that "historically we stand here on firm ground" (*op. cit.*, p. 22).

29. Cf. John 20:31.

Book Reviews

A Commentary on the Gospel according to St. Matthew. By Floyd V. Filson. Pp. vii + 319. $6.00. *A Commentary on the Gospel according to St. Mark.* By Sherman E. Johnson. Pp. xii + 283. $5.25. (Black's New Testament Commentaries.) London: A. and C. Black (Toronto: The MacMillan Co. of Canada), 1960.

These two commentaries can be recommended without reservation to serious students of the gospels at every level. They are the work of accomplished scholars, both Americans, both well known for their previous publications in the *Interpreter's Bible* and in numerous books and articles. Both are deans of famous theological seminaries—Johnson, of the Church Divinity School of the Pacific; Filson, of McCormick. Their work reflects their long experience in the training of men for the ministry; few commentaries are so admirably designed to provide the minister with the materials which he needs for the instruction of his people, as well as for his own understanding of these two gospels.

Both writers have conceived their task in much the same fashion. They are less concerned with the sources on which the evangelists have drawn, whether oral or written, than with the way in which they have handled them. In keeping with a growing tendency of scholarship, they do not regard Mark and Matthew as mere compilers of traditional materials, but as men with a message; and both of them seek to show what the gospel message meant to the men who prepared the records. So Filson tells us: "My primary attempt has not been to reconstruct sources but to grasp and state the meaning of the Gospel author. My main concern has been to make clear how he understood the gospel story and what he wanted the Church to get from his book" (p. v). In a similar vein Johnson can say: "The aim of this commentary is, first, to present the point of view of the evangelist St. Mark and to try to indicate what his words meant to him" (p. vii). Both commentators are of course thoroughly familiar with the methods and results of source-analysis and with the principles of form-criticism, as also with the problems of the Greek text; but in these volumes critical discussion is subordinated to constructive interpretation. The translations are lively and vigorous, accurate without being pedantic, and reasonably free without slipping into paraphrase. The comment is, of necessity, very brief, but it generally bears directly upon that which is really significant. If we sometimes miss the presentation and discussion of different interpretations, we can always be confident that we have before us the considered judgment of an experienced scholar.

In both commentaries, the general validity of the tradition is taken for granted; neither of our writers is at all inclined to ascribe any substantial portion of the materials to the creative activity of the primitive church, though both recognize the fact that the stories and sayings have been shaped to a significant degree by usage in the church. Some readers will be bound to feel (along with this reviewer) that something more might have been done to acquaint the reader with the much more radical approach of R. Bultmann, if only to prepare him for the shock which he is shortly to experience upon his encounter with the *History of the Synoptic Tradition* in English dress. The penetrating and all-pervading scepticism of this work is not lightly to be overcome.

The indexes of both works leave something to be desired. Both give indexes of Scripture references, Jewish writings, and Christian writings; Johnson adds an index of subjects, and Filson an index of pagan writings. We miss an index of modern authors, and (especially for the St. Mark) an index of Greek words.

It is interesting—and gratifying—to observe the caution shown by both scholars in adducing parallels from the Qumran literature. Filson's index gives a single reference to the Scrolls (to the *Manual of Discipline*), and he warns us that while these Scrolls show parallels to Matthew,

> the differences should not be ignored and they are more impressive than the parallels. . . . Rather than assume that these Scrolls circulated freely in Palestine, that Christian leaders were in vital and constant touch with their thought, and that . . . most other intertestamental literature is Essene in character, it would seem preferable to assume that in many aspects the Scrolls reflect a first-century atmosphere which was current in wider circles of Palestine and Syria than merely the monastic Essene communities [pp. 11–12].

Johnson cites these documents much more freely (14 listings in his index), especially the *Manual of Discipline* and the *Fragment of Community Rule*; yet he too states that "there is nothing to indicate that the evangelists were acquainted with this Essene literature. . . . The points of difference between Essenes and early Christians are perhaps more significant than their similarities" (p. 4). He affirms unequivocally that important parallels to the Qumran literature are not to be found in Mark, and thinks that "this may be because much of Mark's tradition comes from Galilee, while other parts of the NT were written by Christians in closer touch with Jerusalem and Judaea, where Essenes were more numerous" (p. 9). Are we getting the first signs of a reaction against early tendencies to overrate the significance of the Qumran materials?

Equally significant as a trend of the times is the fact that Johnson makes considerable use of the newly-discovered *Gospel of Thomas*, which probably appeared too late to enable Filson to draw upon it. Johnson thus has the honour of pioneering the exploitation of the materials offered by this "Gospel" for the purposes of a commentary. There are, as it happens, far

more parallels with Matthew than with Mark in "Thomas"—including, for instance, variant forms of the seven parables of Matthew 13.

FRANK W. BEARE

Trinity College
Toronto

Matthew: Apostle and Evangelist. By EDGAR J. GOODSPEED. Philadelphia and Toronto: The John C. Winston Co., 1959. Pp. 159. $3.50.

THIS little book attempts to prove that Matthew the tax collector was indeed the author of the gospel which bears his name. It is unfortunate that the arguments presented are not as substantial as we have learned to expect in the work of Dr. Goodspeed.

The basic hypothesis of the book is that Jesus was deeply influenced by Isa. 8:16, which Dr. Goodspeed renders: "I will bind up my testimony, and seal my teaching in the heart of my disciples." Facing the same violent end as Isaiah, Jesus resolved to have his teaching preserved in writing by his followers, and to this end called Matthew the tax collector to be his personal stenographer. Dr. Goodspeed cites evidence that shorthand was a flourishing skill in the first century A.D. Who, he asks, would be more likely to be capable of serving as Jesus' secretary than a converted tax collector?

Dr. Goodspeed believes that the First Evangelist's fascination with numbers provides support for authorship by a tax collector whose profession it was to handle arithmetic expertly. He finds the prime example of this in the genealogy with which the gospel opens. The three groups of fourteen partially conceal the author's conceit which consists of six groups of seven. "It is simply the tax collector's way of saying, not flatly, but much more interestingly, 'Jesus is the leading figure of the seventh seven, the climax of it all' " (p. 25). Regrettably Dr. Goodspeed fails to take cognizance of the fact that the third group of fourteen must include Jesus himself in order to fill out its number—without him it contains only thirteen names, including Jechoniah who has already been mentioned in the second group. Quite apart from this arithmetical mistake, the argument (which is frequently repeated in the course of the book) cannot bear the weight placed upon it in the light of the delight in mystic numbers to be observed in the writer of Revelation, not to mention Philo and Augustine, whose profession presumably did not involve mathematics.

The only early evidence for Matthean authorship cited is the familiar word of Papias, which Dr. Goodspeed renders: "So Matthew took down the sayings in the Aramaic language, and everyone interpreted them as well as he could" (p. 16). In interpreting this difficult passage the author ignores the important arguments of other scholars that "the Hebrew dialect" referred to by Papias was indeed Hebrew and not Aramaic, and that the *logia*

he referred to were not the sayings of Jesus but the oracles quoted from the Old Testament to support the Messiahship of Jesus. The verb *sungraphein* used by Papias may in fact be used of the activity of a stenographer, but possibility is not the same as probability, and Dr. Goodspeed does not bridge the gap between the two.

The author points out that a tax collector would be expected to have a larger than average vocabulary. Since the Gospel of Matthew contains 110 words not found elsewhere in the New Testament this can be taken as another indication of the authorship. The weakness of such an argument is patent when the vocabulary of other New Testament books is examined. Thayer's lexicon attributes to Mark 102 words not found elsewhere in the New Testament, and to Luke 302 words not found elsewhere except in Acts. The suggestion that the First Gospel's predilection for parables dealing with money indicates tax collector authorship is as open to objection as Hobart's famous thesis concerning the medical language of St. Luke.

Dr. Goodspeed challenges: If Matthew did not write the Gospel, how came it to be associated with his name? The Greek world of literature, he insists, refused to identify a Greek book by a name associated with a barbarous source (in this instance presumed to be Aramaic) but always without exception by the name of the man who put the material into its Greek dress. "The Greek reading world, in which and for which the Gospels were written, had a definitive and instinctive attitude about this matter [authorship] which admitted of no compromise" (p. 82). In another place Dr. Goodspeed claims that the Greeks "almost worshipped" authorship, and "were averse to anonymity" (p. 38f.). Dr. Goodspeed here seems to ignore the vast difference between the highly sophisticated literary world of the Greeks and the lower class community of slaves and freedmen in which the Gospel chiefly flourished. If it was possible for the Epistle to the Hebrews to circulate anonymously in this community, it was also possible for our First Gospel to go nameless until someone attached to it the name of Matthew on the basis of Papias' allusion. Furthermore, the First Gospel could conceivably have been issued pseudonymously, as were Ephesians and other Christian writings, and have been attributed to Matthew by grateful members of his school. There are many possibilities. The evidence simply does not permit a final decision.

Several lesser matters also draw objection. The author's criticism of Montefiore (p. 23) is based upon a failure to examine the Greek text of Matt. 1:5. The pericope of the widow casting money into the treasury is stated to be the only incident in Mark not reported by Matthew (p. 40), whereas there are at least four others which Matthew ignores. Perhaps the strangest mistake of all is the claim (p. 149) that Matt. 24:16 ("Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains") reflects the exodus to Antioch during the war of 66–70. Flight to Antioch on the Orontes can by no stretch of the imagination be construed as a flight to the mountains when Jerusalem (elevation above 2000 feet) is the point of departure.

Dr. Goodspeed successfully argues against those who claim that an apostolic author would not lean so heavily on written sources such as Mark and possibly Q. An old man, he points out, would be glad to take advantage of such sources to supplement his own failing memory, and yet feel free to modify Mark's order on the basis of his own reminiscences. While there is cogency in this argument, this reviewer cannot believe that an apostle, especially one who held the position of Jesus' personal stenographer, could so seriously distort the Master's teachings as to give us Matt. 23, the Parable of the Wedding Garment (Matt. 22:11ff.), and other similar passages containing merciless condemnation.

It is the opinion of this reviewer that this book does not do justice to its author, to whose prodigious scholarship the world of New Testament studies will always be greatly in debt.

Douglas R. A. Hare

Union Theological Seminary
New York

Lordship and Discipleship (Studies in Biblical Theology No. 28). By Edward Schweizer. London: SCM Press (Toronto: Ryerson Press), 1960. Pp. 136. $2.25.

The great questions which trouble man today are the questions of the meaning of life, and of the fear of a fate against which man is helpless. This is something which should be carefully noted by the preacher of the Gospel. Too often we assume that the greatest problem of man is his sense of sin.

Schweizer points this out in the preface of his book and takes the position that the call to follow Christ is the answer to the meaninglessness of life today and spells the removal of the fear of fate which haunts man. It is as man accepts and obeys Christ in this way that he comes to know him also as the one who was crucified "for him" (p. 7).

In the first half of the book "the Lordship" of Jesus is dealt with. Jesus is exalted to be Lord because in the obedience of his humiliation he perfectly fulfilled the role of "the suffering and exalted Righteous One." This theme is very carefully expounded with reference to the Old Testament, the Apocrypha and other Jewish writings.

The title "the Suffering Servant" is selected as the ideal and most descriptive and comprehensive of Jesus in his Person and Work. The treatment is scholarly and thorough, and Schweizer here makes a decided contribution to theological thought. This does not mean that he breaks completely new ground, but rather that in an orderly and scholarly way the result of much thought on this theme, especially by German scholars, is brought together and made available for English readers.

The exposition of "discipleship" in the latter part is equally profound and scholarly. In chapter one Schweizer clears the way for this fuller exposition. What is said stands in sharp contrast to the easy and humanistic under-

standing of following Jesus, which is so widespread (p. 20). Following Jesus is an act of obedience and stands firmly in the context of grace. The call of Jesus Christ is a call to follow him in his obedience, suffering and humiliation. Discipleship means not only accepting what he has done "for us," but in going "with Him" (p. 115).

The author accepts the work of modern literary criticism fully, sometimes to a surprising extent. Readers will find that they will not be able to agree with the exegesis of certain passages. An example of this is the exegesis of Hebr. 4:14–16 (p. 89), in which the passing of Jesus through the heavens is said to be proclaimed as the saving event. Surely this is undue isolation of a passage from its full context. How can such exegesis be sustained when compared with Hebr. 9:13–22?

A very important feature of this study is its emphasis on the Hebrew origin and roots of Christian thought, as over against prevalent ideas regarding Greek influences. The forms may be Greek but the thought content is Hebrew and Christian (see pp. 102, 120).

Lordship and Discipleship is an excellent study competently carried out. The author's erudite scholarship at times overwhelms the reviewer, who is somewhat removed from the academic field. At the same time this study is worthy of recommendation to the parish minister, who will find a great deal of material here, which, if thoroughly digested, will make excellent sermon material.

L. Louis de Groot

St. Matthew's Presbyterian Church
Montreal

The Kingly Office of the Lord Jesus Christ. By Jean Bosc. Translated by A. K. S. Reid. Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd (Toronto: Clarke, Irwin & Co. Ltd.), 1959. Pp. 166. $3.50.

Everyone is supposed to know these days that Christology is our key doctrine, forming and informing all others, as is illustrated most notably in regard to the doctrine of the Church. But has Christology itself become clearer by this process? Certainly we have abundant literature, from Tillich's radical restatement to D. M. Baillie's incisive *God Was in Christ*; while Karl Barth's formidable dogmatics moves carefully about his pivotal category of *en Christo*. Yet there remained to be sounded—except for those willing to submit to the discipline of reading Barth—an explicit and concise note of that triumphant joy so characteristic of the New Testament Christology.

In 1957 a little volume in the *Labor et Fides* series in Geneva went far to fill this need—Jean Bosc's *L'Office Royal du Seigneur Jésus-Christ*, now ably translated by A. K. S. Reid. Bosc's central and longest chapter is entitled "The Lord," and carries the theme of the whole work. It expounds the exaltation statements in the second article of the Creed. This resembles the "Christology of the *kurios*" advanced by Künneth's resurrection theology,

but escapes its adoptionist tendency (p. 60f.). For Bosc, one can talk of Christ's lordship only "in the light of the resurrection, that is of the manifestation of exaltation" (p. 59).

The ascension of our Lord is decisive; it "represents a new stage upon the royal way followed by the Lord in His work of exalting man" (p. 76). This section (pp. 75–92) on the ascension is excellent. As we might expect, it is Barth's reformulation of the doctrine of atonement, in which "the organic unity and movement" of Christ's kingly ministry is allowed full scope (p. 31), that forms the background of Bosc's treatment. But Bosc's own handling of the significance of the ascension for "distance and movement" is a real contribution to both historical and philosophical theology.

Bosc deals sympathetically and carefully with the Lutheran-Reformed eucharistic debate which "turned on the interpretation of the doctrine of Chalcedon" (p. 80). He shows the merit in each position: the *extra Calvinisticum* safeguards "the sovereign liberty of the Son who, while assuming flesh, remains subject of the incarnation" (p. 82); while the Lutheran *genus majestaticum* safeguards the reality of grace, Christ's "presence and His efficacy in our human world" (p. 86). (This thesis is supported by Wolfson's summary, in *The Philosophy of the Church Fathers*, of the patristic doctrines of "analogy of predominance" on the one hand and mutual penetration of the two natures by *perichoresis* on the other.)

Demythologizing is everyone's concern today; but Bosc's serious treatment finds it inadequate to deal with the resurrection and ascension. The subjective interpretation of the resurrection should be buried along with the erstwhile "psychology of religion" that spawned it (p. 63). Moreover, the ascenion presents a problem in "distance and presence" that was understood by the biblical writers themselves more profoundly than their critics assume. (May we conclude that Bultmann and Tillich are guilty of "premythologizing" the biblical narrative in order to de-mythologize it?)

Bosc's theme could be summed up in his brief reference to the iconography of "Christ in majesty" on the cross in medieval art (p. 58). "To quote an expression of Fortunatus, the great theme is that of Christ dying on the cross clothed in royal purple."

There are misleading errors on pp. 81, 83, 102 and 146. But a main defect may be this. Bosc approaches Christ's ministry in terms of the Calvinist view of his triple office of priest, prophet and king, and proceeds to focus his attention on the kingly. Does this do justice however to two recent correctives: the Reformed Alliance's emphasis on the Suffering Servant motif (the theme of its Eighteenth General Council meeting in Brazil, 1959), and Hendrik Kraemer's insistence that the *triplex munus* must be complemented by a theology of the laity "as an organic part of a total ecclesiology" (*A Theology of the Laity*, p. 90)? Now Bosc is aware of the vital relationship between kingly grace and humanity (p. 159), and of the Christian's calling to say "a Yes pronounced in vigilance" to the world (p. 157); yet whether he has done justice to these insights remains a ques-

tion. Nevertheless, this is a book to praise and to recommend, especially to "working ministers." Bosc provides a healthy complement to Donald Baillie's approach to Christology, and a stimulating exposition of the exaltation events of our faith.

JOSEPH MCLELLAND

Presbyterian College
Montreal

Agents of Reconciliation. By ARNOLD B. COME. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1960. Pp. 176. $3.95.

THIS BOOK attempts to deal with the perennially important question of the Church's relationship to the world. The author emphasizes the truth that the Church must never consider itself an end in itself; the Church must rediscover its primary vocation to be the agency by which the reconciling work of Christ is mediated to the world, described fittingly as a "hell of alienation." The nature of the Church as the community of the reconciled is inseparable from its mission to be the agency of reconciliation to the world. In this regard, Dr. Come gives us an interesting and thoughtful discussion of the nature and mission of the Church in terms of election to responsibility.

In Dr. Come's opinion, its present structure makes it virtually impossible for the Church to fulfil its mission to the world; from a brief, ingenious, but perhaps somewhat superficial consideration of the biblical and historical evidence, he argues that the Church must now completely abandon the distinction between "clergy" and "laity." (Certainly all will welcome Dr. Come's insistence on the vitally important role which the laity have to play in the divine plan of reconciliation; all will agree that all too often the laity have been regarded merely as passive recipients of the Word and Sacraments. But the remedy suggested, based as it is upon the assumption that the structure of the Church is distinctly secondary, and variable according to the historical context, will seem to many the result of a failure to take seriously enough the outward form of the Church as expression and safeguard of its essential nature and unity.) Dr. Come concludes with the assertion that the witness of the *whole* Church will bring the world face to face with the "crisis" which on various levels demands decision. The Church should look for nothing further in the way of results until the *eschaton.*

Agents of Reconciliation is an interesting and stimulating book, but it suffers from some woolly thinking and contradictions in its discussion of the Church, and from a tendency towards sweeping generalization. In spite of this, the book certainly has something to say, and should provoke thought on some of the basic issues confronting the Church today.

A. J. CHALLACOMBE

Trinity College
Toronto

Calvin's Doctrine of the Christian Life. By R. S. Wallace. Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd (Toronto: Clarke, Irwin & Co. Ltd.), 1959. Pp. xvi, 349. $6.00.

This book is a welcome addition to the renascence in Calvin studies and our author is already well known in this field. Once again he has brought us, in a penetrating and refreshing form, an extensive range of Calvin's theology.

Dr. Wallace presents us with an elaboration of the formative concept that governed all of Calvin's theological thought, the *en Christo* doctrine of the New Testament. He points out in his Foreword that this work is not strictly a study of Calvin's ethics, nor does the author's intimate knowledge of his subject matter ever allow him to betray the Reformer at this crucial point. It was foreign to Calvin's thought to erect a theological structure which would become the guiding principle for ethics. The author rightly points out that Calvin's doctrine of the Christian life is not really the *imitatio Christi* understanding but the *imago Christi* into which the believer is formed by faith. Indeed, interpreting ethics in the former sense we would have to hold that for Calvin there could be no Christian ethic. Dr. Wallace points this out with determined clarity and shows us that Calvin's doctrine of the Christian life is not an addendum to his theology but an unfolding of the central Pauline understanding of the *en Christo* doctrine. From this fountain, Calvin's massive theology flows into every fold and crevice of life.

In his study Dr. Wallace elaborates the eschatological dimension of faith by which Calvin saw the believer participating in the whole Christ event. This is the crucial corrective to the limited understanding of faith that plagues so much contemporary Christian thinking. The eschatological arch of faith reaches back to the heart of God, before the foundations of the world were laid. In its essential Christological form, faith is the eternal faithfulness of God to himself thrust into human form. It is this which makes faith both possible and real for the believer. In its eternal dimension faith reaches forward and pierces the innermost dwelling place of God where the glorified Son of man lives in eternal love with the Father.

Dr. Wallace shows that for Calvin the believer, while still held under the forms of sin, participates in the eschatological dimension of faith. The Christian life in its essential form is a reflection, under the forms of grace, of the *imago Christi*. The whole Christ event is the Christian event, the Christian life, which waits in hope on this side of the grave and resurrection for its final consummation. This is the miracle of the grace of Jesus Christ.

Those who have not made a bifurcation between Calvin's theology and his very real concern for the Christian life will, of course, not be surprised by this study which clearly shows that for Calvin no such separation can be tolerated. The holiness of life must not be separated from the grace of election.

In his book, Dr. Wallace makes us hear, again and again, the essential triumphant note of faith that in the total Christ event the whole of creation, including man, has been *already* restored to its original glory and form. And while man lives out his earthly life under the limitations of historic existence

he is allowed to participate in the completed form of salvation. As Christ has already glorified our humanity, perfected our faith and obedience and secured our eternal salvation, so he has also freely given us the fulness of his grace: participation in his completed creation. The participation in, and the reflection of, the perfected *imago Christi* in every area of man's existence is the essence of the Christian life.

This is the hope by which the Christian is sustained and, as Dr. Wallace points out, for Calvin faith and hope are never separate and in many contexts are interchangeable: "hope is nothing else but constancy of faith." Hope, in the New Testament sense, meant for Calvin both an actualization of the perfected image of Christ in the earthly life of the Christian and the expectation that the form completed in Christ would be completed in him in the consummation.

From the extensive writings of Calvin, Dr. Wallace has been able to convey to the reader Calvin's insight into the freedom of life in Christ. To be assured that even now in our earthly days and trials the wondrous work of God is given to us to taste, handle and see, though in a glass darkly, does not leave the Christian lethargic in faith. Precisely the opposite is true. Such assurance enables the Christian to work out the discipline of faith in all his earthly forms. It does not free him from striving; it sets him free to strive. The eschatological dimension of faith alone makes it possible to work out the completed form of salvation in Christ in our human forms and this with fear and trembling. Dr. Wallace points out that this is how Calvin always thought of the relation between justification and sanctification.

The method Dr. Wallace has employed to write his work is not one which lends itself easily to an interesting and lucid style, but for all the quotations and references he has managed to accomplish just that.

The author points out that he has not attempted a critical study of Calvin's thought, but at the same time he has presented most adequately the many shades of meaning in Calvin's theology, so that he allows the critical power of Calvin's own thought to appear.

This work provides us with a rich experience in reading and Dr. Wallace has succeeded admirably in presenting Calvin's understanding of the Christian life in a challenging manner. When the Christian Church needs a deepening of the spirit and the eternal assurance of faith, as it so obviously does in our day, this book is on the required reading list.

Joseph D. Fry

Flin Flon
Manitoba

Freedom and Immortality: The Forwood Lectures in the University of Liverpool, 1957. By Ian T. Ramsay. London: SCM Press (Toronto: Ryerson Press), 1960. Pp. 157. $3.25.

Professor Ramsey's intention in this book is to show that whatever justification there is for belief in freedom and immortality is closely related to whatever empirical justification there may be for the language of meta-

physics and philosophical theology; for he believes that the same kind of human situation underlies both. Furthermore, the topics of freedom and immortality are themselves properly united because each makes a similar claim about the universe. What the author attempts to do is to show what the terms immortality and freedom (and others associated with these) signify and what their use in ordinary language presupposes by way of our awareness of ourselves as we engage in certain kinds of activity.

The author is, of course, closely associated with the modern trend of linguistic analysis, and he is determined to accept what it has to teach about the way we talk, think, and conceptualize about the universe as we live in it—about the way, that is, in which we strive to understand so-called Reality —and to use the method of analysis in order to *clarify* meaning and illuminate experience rather than restrict meaning and impoverish experience. The language of analytic philosophy is itself complicated at times and often quite baffling to the uninitiated; and it has a kind of idiom of its own. I must suggest, therefore, that the reader whose interest is aroused would be obliged to acquaint himself with some of the writings of the linguistic school of philosophy including Ramsey's own works, before he could understand some of the arguments and references.

In view of the subject matter and the inevitable interest in it among the clergy at large, the author would have done well to try harder than he appears to have done to avoid the "analytic idiom" wherever possible. Furthermore, as is often the way with such writers, the illustrations sometimes tend to get in the way of the point they are intended to illustrate.

Basically, the point is this: that the descriptive language of science does not exhaust all that can be said significantly about some human situations both subjectively and objectively. While such situations are certainly given as objects in motion, *i.e.*, as consisting of observables, they are more besides this, and words like duty, freedom, etc., are intended to point to this "more-than-observables" character of situations with which every human agent, as an agent, is perfectly familiar. The author believes that Christian doctrines, especially as they concern so-called immortality and eternal life (and he insists upon the importance of distinguishing between the two) cannot be given an adequate logical placing unless they are understood in relation to this kind of situation. But Christian doctrine goes beyond both the moral question and that of immortality as such to present an eschatology (and essentially a *realized* eschatology with Christ at its "centre") which notions of resurrection of a body, and immortality of a soul, and "The End," and eternal life, all attempt from different directions, and with various special concerns, and with corresponding limitations to explicate.

The author's own attempt is worth careful consideration, for it goes a long way towards combating the glib, careless, over-confident or woolly verbiage of so many pastors on the subject of a life after death.

GORDON WATSON

Trinity College
Toronto

Sandals at the Mosque: Christian Presence amid Islam. By KENNETH CRAGG. New York: Oxford University Press, 1959. Pp. 160. $2.75.

THE increasingly urgent problem of the relationship of Christianity to other faiths is being examined in a new series entitled *Christian Presence*, edited by Dr. M. A. C. Warren. The first volume of the series to appear is that by Kenneth Cragg, director of the Study Programme in Islamics of the Near East Christian Council and author of *The Call of the Minaret* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1956).

Dr. Cragg's aim in Part 1, "In Quest of Islam," is to make the reader aware of the religious spirit of Islam. He does this by taking a typical Muslim New Year sermon and selecting from it the characteristic themes of Muslim devotion and aspiration. But, as he points out, the language in which Muslim devotion is cast by the orthodox preachers belongs to an age gone by and has lost its appeal; at least, it is no longer adequate.

In Part 2, "Conditions of Inter-Religion," attention is drawn to the inter-involvement of religions in the modern world, an inter-involvement which arises from the fact that they have to do with the same common denominator, human nature, and from the fact that they are being compelled by the pressure of events to address themselves to the same problems. Because of the serious challenge confronting all of them, it is imperative that they discover their common ground and work out a "frontier theology." That Christianity and Islam have much in common Dr. Cragg is at pains to demonstrate.

While he is no advocate of easy co-existence, he does believe that Christians need to become more aware of the genuine religious values in Islam. The sandals "parked" outside the door of the mosque—a sight common in the East and one from which the title of the book is derived—are mute witnesses to the reality of these values. Furthermore, Christians should judge Islam not only by what it has been, and is, but also by its aspirations, its outreach, its potentialities. To show its potentialities Dr. Cragg examines the implications of some of its key terms. Take *shirk* for example, which in orthodox theology means "the association of other gods with God." *Shirk* so interpreted is largely a thing of the past. The real question is: What does, or should, *shirk* mean today? Dr. Cragg points to three modern gods which are seeking to usurp the place of God: (1) nationalism which is the deification of a racial collective; (2) unbridled commercialism which puts profit before the welfare of man; (3) Communist absolutism which recognizes no master other than the Party and the Communist Manifesto. (Its counter-ism can also be *shirk*, as he pertinently points out.) An Islam which insists on putting God first has much in common with Christianity.

But on one fundamental matter the author feels that Christianity and Islam part company and that is on the question of the Incarnation and Atonement. He is convinced that Islam's view of sin and of human nature is inadequate and believes that as Muslims come to explore the deeper meanings of their faith they will come to realize this. In the meantime all

that Christians can do is to adopt an attitude of humility, patience and love in their dealings with Muslims. Hence the title of Part 3, "Present with the Peace of God." God's reaction to sin must be something more than the giving of a revelation, a Qur'ān; it must involve some attempt on God's part to win men to himself and this leads of necessity, Dr. Cragg believes, to the Christian doctrine of Incarnation and Atonement.

It may be doubted whether on this fundamental issue Dr. Cragg has made out a convincing case for the Christian position. For Muslims may well doubt whether the idea of the divine initiative in seeking out human sinners and trying to win them to himself leads inevitably to the distinctively Christian doctrine. While the author may not succeed in convincing Muslims, it is to be hoped that he will enlighten Christians.

F. V. WINNETT

University College
Toronto

NEW SPRING BOOKS from G. R. Welch Company Limited

COMPANION OF ETERNITY
by W. Gordon Ross
A sprightly dialogue dealing with the age-old but always contemporary question, What is Man?
(April) $3.95

STRUCTURES OF PREJUDICE
by Carlyle Marney
An analysis of the sources and expressions of prejudice in culture, this book identifies, locates and describes prejudices which remain in all our lives under the guise of their usefulness, rightness or inevitability.
(May) $4.50

COMPASSION AND COMMUNITY
by Haskell M. Miller
Recovering for today a lost dynamic in the relationship of the Protestant church to secular agencies of social work is the purpose of this book, which surveys thoroughly the field of religion and social welfare in depth and scope.
(June) $3.50

SEX WAYS—IN FACT AND FAITH
edited by Evelyn M. and Sylvanus M. Duvall
A workbook prepared for the North American Conference on Church and Family, providing a study for all Christian leaders who seek honest answers to the perplexing questions of contemporary family life.
(April) $3.95

THE CONTEXT OF DECISION
by Gordon D. Kaufman
This succinct introduction to the central problem of ethics—decision making—describes in forthright terms the theological context of the Christian life.
(May) $2.50

THE LONELY HEART
by Cyril H. Powell
"This is the best treatment of loneliness that I have read . . ."—Leslie D. Weatherhead.
(April) $2.50

ORDER FROM YOUR REGULAR BOOKSTORE